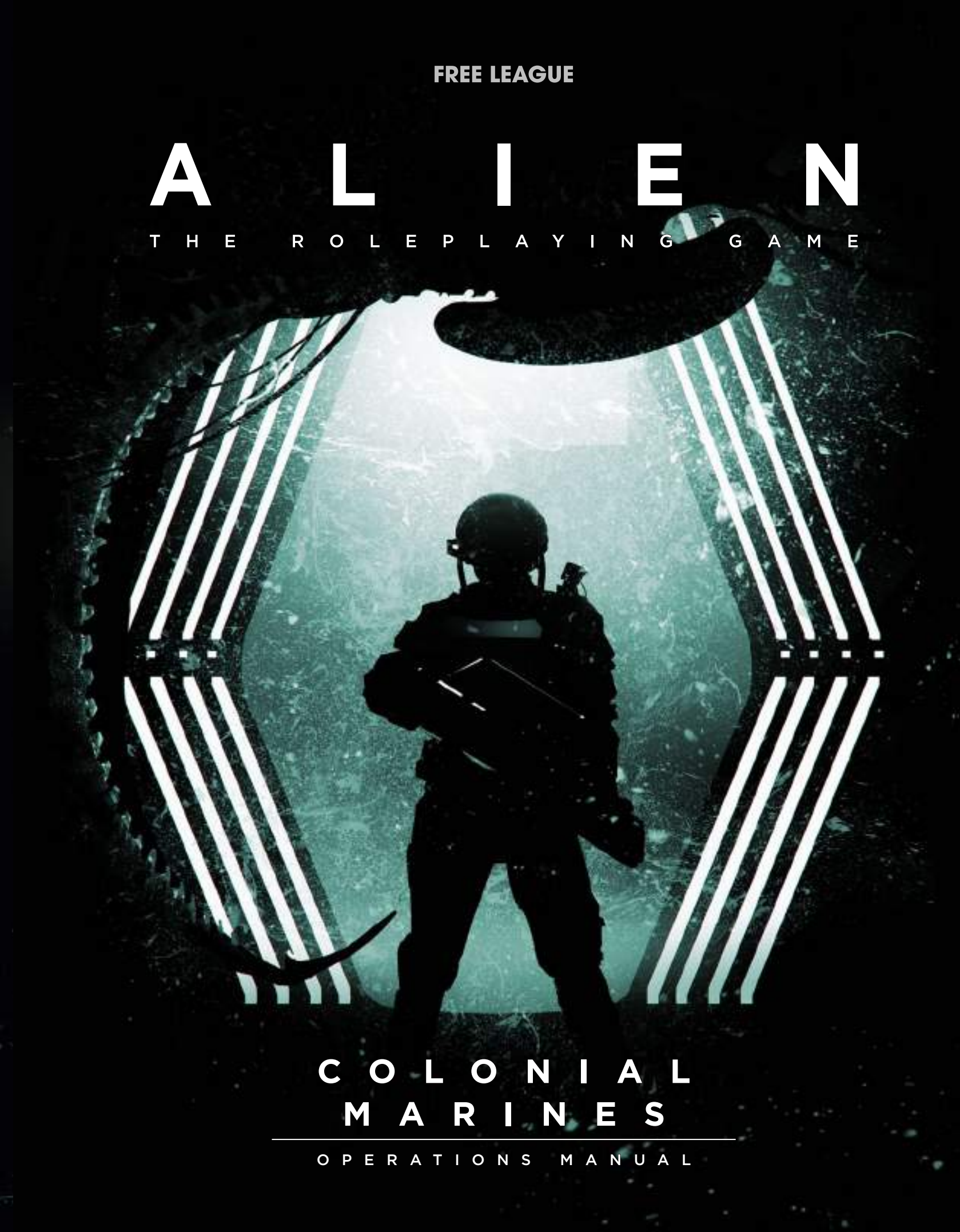
FREE LEAGUE

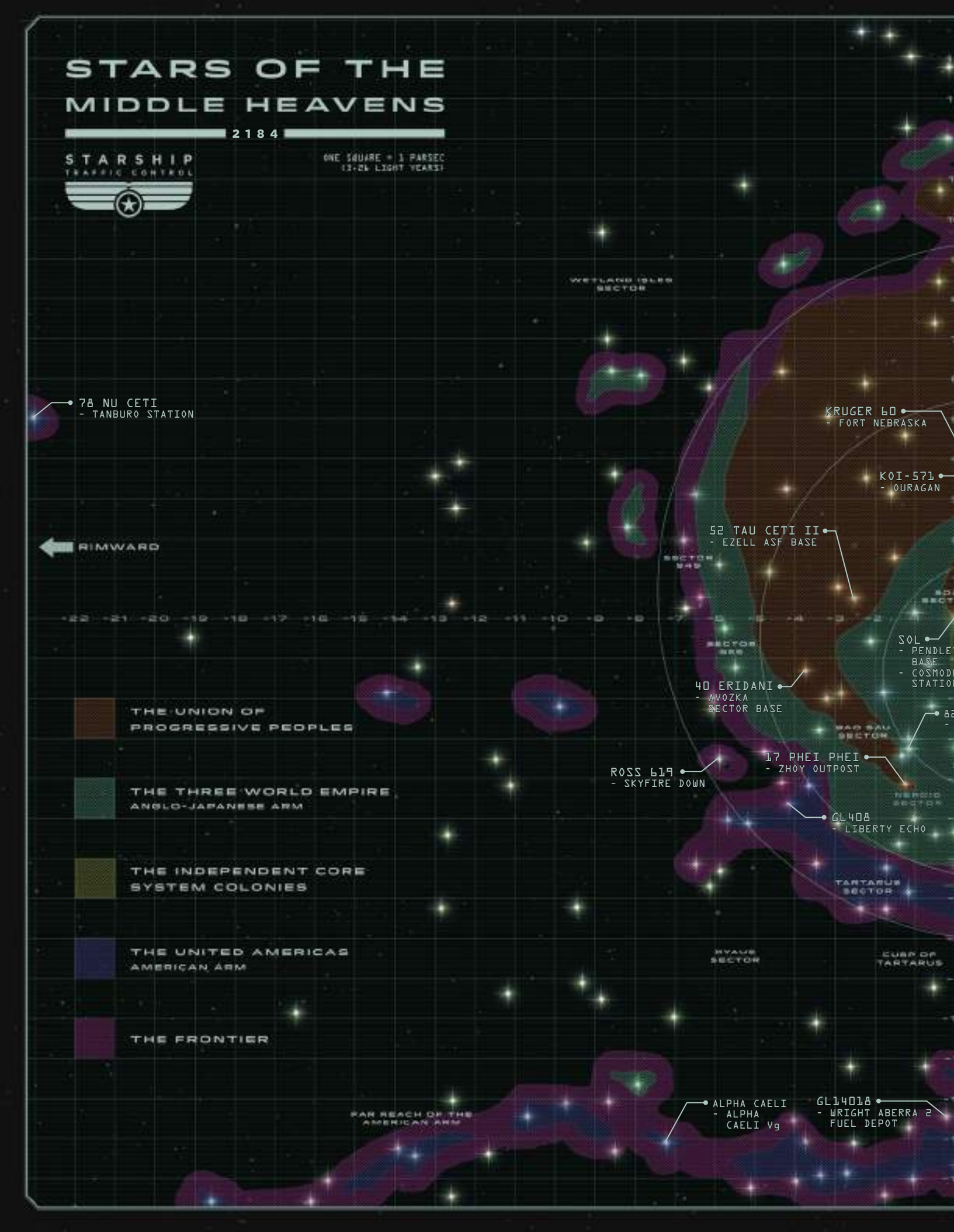
ALIEN

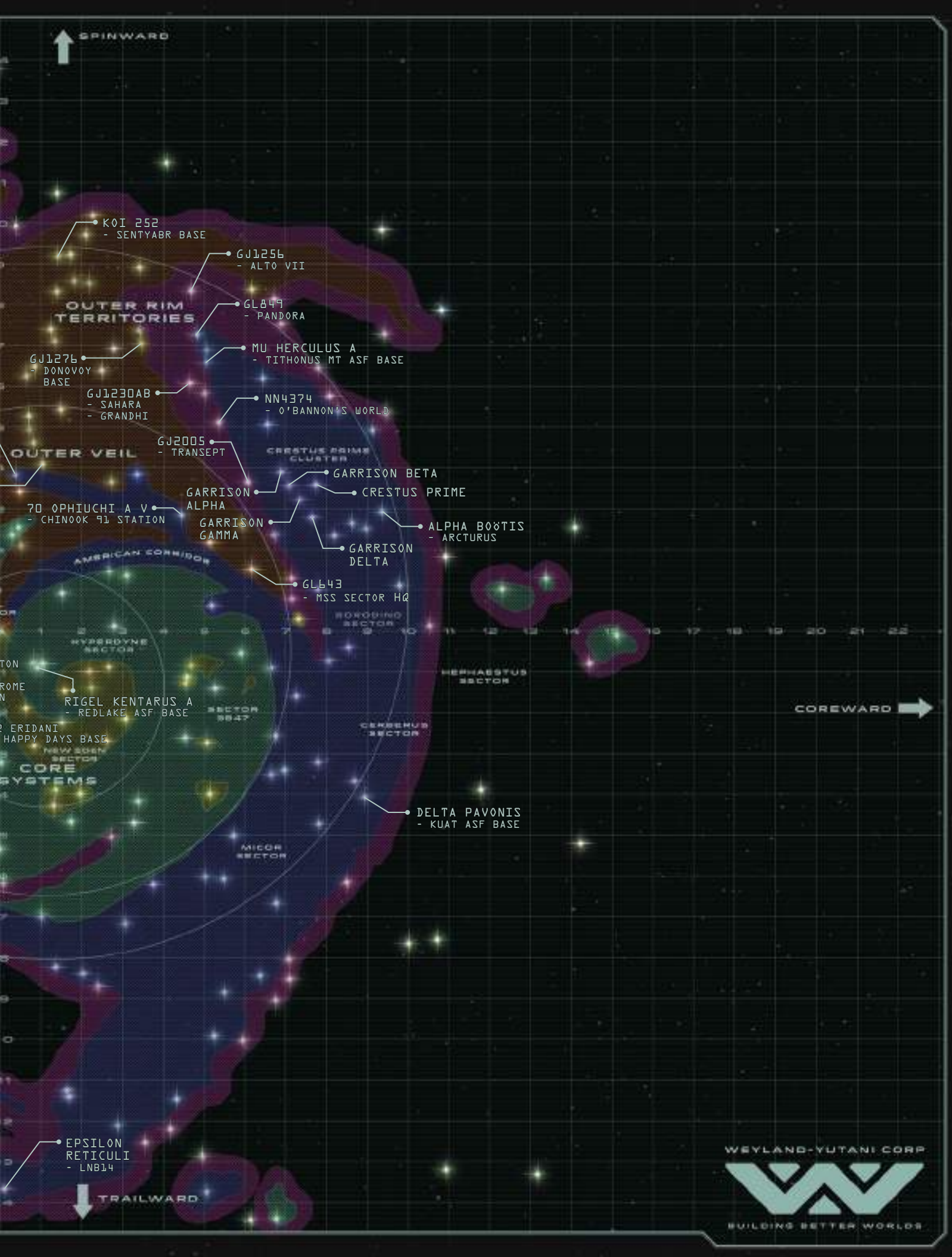
THE ROLEPLAYING GAME



COLONIAL MARINES

OPERATIONS MANUAL


STARS OF THE
MIDDLE HEAVENS
2184
STARSHIP
TRAFFIC CONTROL
ONE SQUARE = 1 PARSEC
(3.26 LIGHT YEARS)
WETLAND ISLES SECTOR
78 NU CETI
- TANBURO STATION
KRUGER 60
- FORT NEBRASKA
KOI-571
- OURAGAN
52 TAU CETI II
- EZELL ASF BASE
RIMWARD
-22 -21 -20 -19 -18 -17 -16 -15 -14 -13 -12 -11 -10 -9 -8 -7 -6 -5 -4 -3 -2 -1
SECTOR 249
SECTOR 566
SOL
- PENDLE BASE
- COSMOD STATIO
40 ERIDANI
- AVOZKA SECTOR BASE
BAO BAU SECTOR
17 PHEI PHEI
- ZHOY OUTPOST
ROSS 619
- SKYFIRE DOWN
NEREID SECTOR
GL408
- LIBERTY ECHO
TARTARUS SECTOR
THE UNION OF PROGRESSIVE PEOPLES
THE THREE WORLD EMPIRE
ANGLO-JAPANESE ARM
THE INDEPENDENT CORE SYSTEM COLONIES
THE UNITED AMERICAS
AMERICAN ARM
THE FRONTIER
RYAVE SECTOR
CUSP OF TARTARUS
FAR REACH OF THE AMERICAN ARM
ALPHA CAELI
- ALPHA CAELI Vg
GL14018
- WRIGHT ABERRA 2 FUEL DEPOT


SPINWARD
KOI 252
- SENTYABR BASE
GJ1256
- ALTO VII
OUTER RIM TERRITORIES
GL849
- PANDORA
MU HERCULUS A
- TITHONUS MT ASF BASE
GJ1276
- DONOVOY BASE
GJ1230AB
- SAHARA
- GRANDHI
NN4374
- O'BANNON'S WORLD
OUTER VEIL
GJ2005
- TRANSEPT
CRESTUS PRIME CLUSTER
GARRISON BETA
CRESTUS PRIME
GARRISON ALPHA
70 OPHIUCHI A V
- CHINOOK 91 STATION
GARRISON GAMMA
ALPHA BOÖTIS
- ARCTURUS
GARRISON DELTA
AMERICAN CORRIDOR
GL643
- MSS SECTOR HQ
BORODINO SECTOR
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22
HYPERDYNE SECTOR
HERMAGSTUS SECTOR
RIGEL KENTARUS A
- REDLAKE ASF BASE
SECTOR 5847
COREWARD
CERBERUS SECTOR
ERIDANI
HAPPY DAYS BASE
NEW EDEN SECTOR
CORE SYSTEMS
DELTA PAVONIS
- KUAT ASF BASE
MICOR SECTOR
EPSILON RETICULI
- LNB14
TRAILWARD
WEYLAND-YUTANI CORP
BUILDING BETTER WORLDS

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WELCOME TO THE CORPS

"A day in the Marine Corps is like a day on the farm: Every meal's a banquet. Every paycheck's a fortune—every formation's a parade! I love the Corps!"

—MASTER SERGEANT AL APONE

Armor piercing rounds sizzle through raw flesh as plasma beams sear swollen retinas. Acrid smoke chokes down your throat before you realize what's burning is you. Chemical attacks melt your armor, simmer your eyeballs, and fuse your warped helmet to your skull, while bioweapons turn your insides out and pulp you into a quivering mound of black jelly.

Welcome to war on the razor edge of space, marine—where nukes are yesterday's news, pulse rounds are cheap and a human life is only worth its weight in stock options. It's a living hell—but none of that's as bad as the flashes of gnashing metal teeth that terrorize you every time you try to close your eyes—like some goddamn monster just split your head open and crawled inside your dreams.

You joined the Corps because you wanted to see the stars—well, that and because you wanted to shoot at things. You believe in duty and honor. You believe in the Corps. You've made your best friends for life here—and watched plenty of them get cut down by shrapnel or claw for no good reason at all. Hell, sometimes it feels like God doesn't want you out in space anymore than the Devil does. A nuke never cares whose side you're on—both heaven and hell are always looking for new recruits.

But enough of that philosophy crap. You get paid to follow orders, not ask questions. You're just a grunt—no offense. So lock and load your pulse rifle, marine—you've got a job to do. Protect and serve the citizens of the Outer Rim colonies—no matter what the cost.

WHAT'S IN THIS BOOK

This book is a complete campaign module for the ALIEN RPG, giving you all the tools you need to run a full open-world campaign as the iconic Colonial Marines. This is the first in a series of modules dedicated to the Campaign play mode (as opposed to Cinematic play, see page 19 of the core rulebook). Each campaign module will focus on one main career in the ALIEN universe.

Just like the core rulebook, this book is divided into a Players' Section (Chapters 1–5) and Game Mother's Section (Chapters 6–10). All players are allowed to access the Players' Section at any time—this is your field guide to the weapons, vehicles, protocols, and politics of the United States Colonial Marine Corps (USCMC). Keep it just as handy as your M41A1, and you just might survive out here on the ready line.

The Game Mother's section, starting on page 108, is for the GM's eyes only, top secret, hush-hush. Do not venture here if you are to be a player in this campaign. Just don't—you'll spoil the fun for everyone. ■

THE ROLE OF THE COLONIAL MARINES. Before we discuss what exactly it is you've gotten yourself into, let's take a look at what the USCMC does. The amended National Security Act describes it as follows:

"The United States Colonial Marine Corps] is an integral part of the United Americas Allied Command (UAAC) that is tasked with maintaining the collective security of all United American (UA) signatories and their recognized interstellar colonies within the Frontiers of the Network."

We are the first line of defense against any attack on a UA colony—that means any world belonging to the United States, Canada, Latin America, and any other member of the UA. That definition has sometimes been broadened to include the colonies of UA ally nations like the Three World Empire.

"Working closely with colonial administration and local governments, the Colonial Marines are a first response threat assessment group designed to handle most armed conflicts and natural disasters within the colonized boundaries of the 20 Parsec Limit."

If there is any problem a colony can't handle on its own, the UA throws the colonial marines at it to see if they stick. That means you, marine.

"Under the purview of the UAAC, the Colonial Marines coordinate with the Colonial Armed Forces, Colonial Navy, Aerospace Forces, and the Defense Fleet to execute any extended peace or wartime extrasolar engagements and operations necessary to protect the integrity of the colonial United Americas."

Sound's boring, I know. What it means is that the Colonial Marines can be backed up and augmented by the other armed forces to ruin the day of any asshole who thinks they're better than us.

"In the event that the Secretary of Defense and the UAAC High Command should become incapacitated, deceased, resign, or be removed from office, the highest-ranking officer of the USCMC shall assume command of an advisory council representing the other branches of service. This interim UAAC Command shall control the nation's military might under the President of the United Americas until such time as the vacant roles can be filled."

Right after the UAAC, the USCMC has superiority over all other branches of the UA military—and deservedly so. The other services can only accomplish co-dependently what the colonial marines can do on their own. If everything goes to hell during war time and we lose UAAC Command, the USCMC leads the charge against the enemy. Finally, there's this bullshit amendment:

"Co-financed by Colonial Administration and the Weyland-Yutani corporation in order to offer technologically superior protective services to joint venture colony worlds, the USCMC can also be activated as a corporate security force tasked with protecting short-term company interests."

In layman's terms, sometimes we're the badass gallant heroes riding in on a dropship and a prayer to protect life, liberty, and the pursuit of paychecks—and sometimes we're just Weyland-Yutani's bitch. ■

A LIFE IN THE CORPS

Let's talk about your part to play in this shitstorm. I'm not going to pussyfoot you—a life in the Colonial Marines is damn hard and you get little reward. Sure, you get money to send home and keep the family afloat. You get instant friends, a sleep pod of your own, and three squares a day.

Better yet, you not only get to shoot that gun your recruiter mentioned, but you get rewarded for shooting it. Just make damn sure you shoot at the things they tell you to shoot at and try not to grease any civilians—an important distinction when hoping for that reward.

HAVE HYPERSLEEP POD, WILL TRAVEL

First, you are going to sleep a lot. Even with our fastest displacement drives, it still takes almost three months to get from one side of claimed space to the other. Try to get there on something slower than a cruiser or frigate and it could take three years. That's hypersleep time in a freezer pod doing nothing but dreaming. Because of this, your tour is going to take a few more years than you probably thought it would. The good news is that while everyone else you grew up with is getting old on some mining asteroid, you'll still be young and kickin' when your tour is up.

Now, all that shit about visiting exciting new worlds? Well, all the other Outer Rim colonies are just as boring as that lump of space rock you call home. Planets, moons, asteroids—it don't make no difference. Every world's got a sunrise and a sunset or two—but on the Outer Rim, they are always "too" something. Some are too wet or too dry, others are too hot or too cold—and every one of them is looking for a way to make you all too dead.

Hell, most of the colonies you'll deploy to ain't even real breathers—they're shake and bakers. That processed canned air stinks just as bad on every one of 'em—they all got that cheap metal taste. Why? The O2 there is just as recycled as the shit on your home ball. If there were a ton of worlds we could breath on, do you think the company would be cranking out those big ass air scrubbers again? The colonies have got an over-population and overcrowding problem. Humanity needs breathing room—and there ain't no more left. That long-ass American Arm has got to grope just a little further into the void and hope nothing out their gnaws its fingers off in the dark. That's why they'll be dropping you and your squad's asses on the Frontier—to secure new planets and moons on the ready line of known space.

INDIGENOUS LIFEFORMS

On the Frontier, everything wants to kill you—including the damn air. If the O2 ain't that tinny recycled shit, it's probably poisoned. Ion storms will turn your dropship into a brick in freefall, and there are alien critters on these outer colonies that want nothing more than to eat you inside out. Bugs, beasts, and blobs—one platoon even fought off a goddamn dinosaur on Moldoon's Moon.

When the local fauna gets out of hand, we're the goddamn exterminators.

Yes, sir—we get paid to endanger species. More often than not we clear out the local fauna and make it safe for the colonists, their babies, and their babies' babies—a little shit job we like to call a bughunt. Sure, some of them space "bugs" are cute. Some might even seem friendly—at first. But trust me, you don't need no poodle-sized cockroach humping your leg in the middle of the night, pooping its larva in your boot at dawn and eating your face for breakfast. Nothing out here is your friend besides your fireteam buddy and your M41A1.

Even the fucking plants want nothing more than to turn you into fertilizer—but that's why they give us the incinerators. If the jungle so much as looks at you funny, you torch it. Sometimes you just have to burn the forest from the trees—and then burn down the fucking trees as well—just for good measure. Call in an airstrike. Douse it in toxic chemicals. You do what it takes to make the bad plants and angry animals go away. Don't go throwing nukes at the colony, though—the corporate types usually don't like us irradiating their planet to protect it. Your job on Frontier worlds is to make it easy for the dumb-ass colonists to set up shop—not to make them glow in the dark.

INVASIVE SPECIES

Then there's the real assholes out here—us. People. Every nation and two-bit independent colony is pushing up against each other and the unknown. Most colonial insurrections are laughable, and any raiders or pirates that the Colonial Marshals can't handle are a flash in the pan for the Corps. But every now and then, somebody gets entrenched on some key production world. You just can't scrape 'em off your shoe, so you've got to go in on foot and in force.

Lots of times, corporations are scrambling to own everything and rent you standing room only. Sometimes two companies will get into spit fights that end with us coming in on one side or the other and waving a big stick around. On the Frontier it's all about who has the biggest stick—everyone is out here waving their sticks like they own the joint. Sometimes your stick isn't big enough. Sometimes the guy next door waves a bigger stick back. Sometimes, he waves a tank. Next thing you know, everyone's nuked each other and there's one less habitable moon to squabble over. But all's fair in love and war or some shit—right, marine? Right. ■

DARK HORIZONS

So, I've given you a bunch of hypotheticals, marine—but how does this relate to you right now? Lately, there have been more and more open conflicts erupting along the Frontier. As if Australia and the Oil Wars weren't bad enough, the nuking of Hadley's Hope on LV-426 has caused a major schism in interstellar relations, and things are beginning to look bad—real bad.

RUMOR CONTROL

For almost twenty years now, the socialist Union of Progressive Peoples and the United Americas (Chapter 11 of the ALIEN RPG core rulebook) have engaged in a friendly cold war game of cat and mouse—each upstaging the other in an arms race that can only end in mutual annihilation. That end may be coming along a lot quicker than either side realizes. Rumor has it the UPP has had enough of the status quo—that they have stolen some secret weapon plans from Weyland-Yutani and completed the program before the UA has. We are, it seems, about to go to war.

There are also hushed rumors about that crazy banned book that's been making its way across the network—Robert Morse's *Space Beast*. Dark Network node chatter claims the book's account is real, and that some sick terrorist fuck's got an army of the goddamn beasts ready to be set loose on Frontier colonies. Some even claim it's not terrorists, but the UPP, and that Hadley's was nuked by them because Weyland-Yutani was breeding the beasts there to begin with—but that's none of my business.

HERE ARE THE FACTS

While Colonial Administration has been pretty quiet about it, there is some truth to the rumors. Over the past few months, the cold war on the Frontier has gotten real hot, real fast. The UPP has been showing up and claiming American systems left and right—drawing lines in our own backyards and daring us to cross them.

And they aren't the only ones being bold. There are disgruntled colonists on production worlds threatening to destroy supply chains if their demands aren't met. There are fanatics on the Rim who will run right up to you just to explode in your face, and there's even someone on the Frontier way worse than any corporation or government—someone big and powerful who doesn't like us very much.

Whomever these fuckers are, they're bombing border worlds off the map—and they are using something nasty to do it—something nastier than any nuke. They've got black-goop biochemical weapons that will turn you into a goddamn monster yourself. Whatever that crap is, it's terrifying, and it ain't from around here.

It's alien.

So remember, marine—we're always the big boys and girls on the Frontier—until we're not. Right now, we are not. ■

LIFE AFTER THE CORPS. So you think you're going to hang back from the front lines, collect your paycheck, hypersleep your way through your tour, and go home in one piece, eh? That's cute. For the sake of argument, let's say you do survive and make it back to your home ball. Let me tell you what you've got to lose.

YOUR SOUL: The Corps changes you. Makes you a little dead inside. Complete your tour of duty alive and you'll get to settle somewhere. You'll get a pension and all that, but it won't be the same you that goes back to your old shake and bake. For a lot of marines, regular colony life just doesn't work anymore. They've seen too much strange shit to go back to farming or mining. Combat is what you know—either you have to conquer it or it conquers you.

YOUR BODY: Sometimes your inside-self isn't the only thing wrecked. Sometimes you lose a limb, sometimes you lose them all. If that happens, there's usually some corporate sponsor willing to give you use of their android prosthetics, for a price—they own the hardware, so technically they own whatever wetwear is attached to it. That means you.

You'll go from military service to corporate mercenary in the blink of an eye, so forget about settling down on some nice little homesteader world with a wife or husband, 2.5 kids, and a Daihotai tractor. One way or another, ninety percent of you that sign up for this shit are in it for life. So get comfortable, marine. You might be here a while. ■

HISTORY

"If you know the enemy and you know yourself, you need not fear the result of a hundred battles."

—SUN TZU

The 22nd century has seen massive population growth, prompting a search for new assets—and the growth of nations in a time of limited resources usually means one thing—war.

While initially formed as a protector of worlds, nowadays the United States Colonial Marine Corps is more of a protector of assets. Companies such as Weyland-Yutani, Alphatech, and newcomer Grant Corp. have invested much in the military, and as such have the luxury of calling in favors with a senator here or a colonel there. The usual response—send a platoon with a CO who is easy to manipulate and a corporate "advisor" to guide things.

It wasn't always that way, however. Here's a detailed history that showcases how the corps evolved to be what it is today—and drives home just how much it is needed.

WHAT CAME BEFORE: THE WEYLAND ERA

Many of the innovations of the 21st century came from one man's vision—Sir Peter Weyland. His Weyland Corp. found habitable worlds, got us there faster than the speed of light, let us sleep along the way, made the air at our destinations breathable, and provided us with artificial life to help minimize our risk and accomplish our goals.

Each new world conquered meant a new settlement far from home—but who was going to protect them? Earthbound governments could only reach so far into the heavens—many smaller nations just didn't have the resources to support people on other worlds. Moreover, the last thing that powerful nations like the US, Russia, and China wanted was for corporations to form their own countries.

As it became increasingly clear that the only way for humanity to survive was through extrasolar expansion, earthly governments knew they needed to get in on the action. The United Nations was reborn as the United Nations Interplanetary Corps (UNIC). Key member nations included the EU, US, Russia, India, United Latin America, the Central African Confederation, and Japan—until financial juggernauts Weyland Corp. and the Yutani Corporation spearheaded the formation of the Three World Empire (3WE) by bringing together Great Britain, Japan, Mars, and Titan—a conglomerate star-nation built by corporations. The 3WE then proceeded to cherry-pick some of UNIC's key powers.

In response, China formed the Chinese/Asian Nations Cooperative (CANC)—their own coalition of nations with extrasolar colonies—further weakening the UNIC. Often referred to as the Cooperative or Co-op, the CANC used its own extrasolar colonization program to establish the Chinese Arm of known space as the Three World Empire defined the Anglo-Japanese Arm.

With the formation of the 3WE, things looked very good for Weyland Corp.—until a scant few years later. By the mid-2090s, Sir Peter Weyland and CEO Meredith Vickers were declared lost along with the ill-fated Prometheus Project. Examining the books, Weyland Corp. found itself in severe debt—Sir Peter had overextended the company's assets to fund his pet projects. Luckily, the company was bought out by Hideo Yutani and merged with the Yutani Corporation.

But that was then. It wasn't until the 22nd century that things really got interesting. ■

GROWING PAINS

2098–2101

BIRTH OF THE CORPS The end of the 21st century heralds a radical change for starfaring society. As Weyland Corp. reorganizes to merge with Yutani, the United States finds itself in conflict with the CANC over extrasolar resources. In need of a standing fighting force trained to protect their new exoplanets on the edge of the Outer Veil, the US forms a new branch of the military: The United States Colonial Marine Corps (USCMC). The National Security Act of 2101 sets the structure of the USCMC at four divisions with four aerospace wings and support services plus a fifth division and wing for reserves.

2103

DISSOLUTION During a UNIC summit, the United States, United Latin Americas, and Canada announce their intentions to leave the United Nations and form a conglomerate super-nation called the United Americas. Before the summit is over, many alliances are broken. North, South, and Central America begin the process of unifying.

2104–2106

UNITED EXPANSION The United Americas is formed. Under the new banner, the USCMC operates in conjunction with the Canadian Colonial Armed Forces (CCAF), the Latin American Colonial Navy (LACN), and the United States Aero Space Force (USASF) to defend United American interests throughout the ever-expanding colonial frontier.

All military divisions answer to the United Americas Allied Command (UAAC)—a think tank of high-level admirals and generals led by UA Secretary of Defense De La Cruz. The UA is quick to define the new borders of the American Arm and launches the United American Outer Rim Defense (UAORD)—a joint Navy, Marine, Army, and Aerospace division with the specialized duty of protecting the outer colonies.

As resources within the Outer Veil dwindle, a push is made to colonize more distant worlds. Weyland-Yutani and Hyperdyne Systems work with the UA to launch several large-scale colonization efforts like the USCSS *Covenant, Concordat, Arceon, Affiance*, and *Allegiance*. After several incidents, the fanatical Earth Savers—a group dedicated to forcing mankind back to earth—becomes classified as a terrorist organization by the FBI.

2106–2108

CIVIL WAR As new colonial laws take effect, the Paraguayan colony of Torin Prime pushes back against the unification of the three Americas. The J'Har rebel insurgency there releases a manifesto of terror and manages to take over most of the planet's key energy production facilities. All UA loyalists are rounded up and detained in concentration camps which also serve as J'Har headquarters, essentially serving as human shields to protect their leadership.

The J'Har spread the conflict to other colonies, resulting in both peaceful protest and armed conflict. A massive labor dispute occurs on Thedus, spurred on by J'Har advisors who use the chaos to disrupt military supply lines to Torin Prime. Barely two years in the making, the United Americas faces a civil war.

While the Thedus dispute only lasts four months, it takes nearly two years for the UA to liberate Torin Prime, an embarrassment for the newly formed Outer Rim Defense. Once the J'Har leadership is defeated, the other colonies appear to fall in line—but the unrest on the Frontier has only just begun.

TIMELINE

2100

2101
The United States passes the National Security Act. The Colonial Marine Corps (USCMC) is formed.

2103
The American nations and their extrasolar colonies exit the United Nations Interplanetary Corps (UNIC) and begin the unification process.

2104
The United Americas (UA) is formed. Weyland-Yutani initiates several large-scale colonization efforts to increase the scope of the UA. The *Covenant* mission is launched, followed the next year by the *Concordat*.

2105

2106
Torin Prime revolts against the new UA, prompting a civil war amongst the extrasolar colonies.

2109
The Extrasolar Colonial Administration, the Colonial Coast Guard, and the Colonial Marshal Bureau are formed. The USCMC is expanded and their Artificial Womb Soldier Program begins.

2110
Contact is lost with the far spinward and trailward colonies. The exploratory scout vessels *Phebe*, *Cronus*, *Mnemosyne*, and *American* are sent to investigate. Only the *Concordat* mission to the Hyades Cluster is successful. The other far colonies are declared lost.

2113
The 20 Parsec Limit is set. A Network Expansion Program begins.

2115

2120
The original Weyland Corp. patent on synthetics expires. Hyperdyne and Seegson rush to create their own artificial life.

2122
The *Nostromo* Incident occurs. An alleged quarantine failure involving a deadly organism results in destruction of the cargo hauler and the death of its crew.

2124
A Weyland-Yutani expeditionary team makes first contact with the Arcturians. It is humanity's first recorded encounter with sentient extraterrestrial life.

2125

2130

2135

2137
An unidentified contagion sweeps through the Frontier, claiming Sevastopol and Mendel Stations, the Wright-Aberra fuel depot, and several starships.

2140
The Three World Empire (3WE) reroutes Frontier traffic through Anchorpoint Station.

2145

2147
The 3WE demands Hyperdyne submit to an ICC investigation. The Core Conflict begins.

2150

2151
The Core Conflict ends. The ICSC is formed. The Chinese/Asian Nations Cooperative (CANC) supports rebel colonists against the 3WE and USCMC in the Helene Uprising.

2154
The Khadaji Conflict takes place. The UA annexes Helene 215 and Lebanon II from the 3WE.

2155

2156

The Populist Movement begins. First open warfare between the USCMC and UPP forces.

2157

The New Earth Plague kills 40 million people. The HD855512 system is condemned. Hadley's Hope is established on LV-426.

2158

The CANC invades Arcturus. The USCMC launches Operation Arcturan Shield.

2159

The USCMC liberates Arcturus from the CANC with Operation Arcturan Freedom. Many Arcturian cultural and historical artifacts are looted or lost. Arcturus becomes a protectorate of the UA.

2160

Fearing the CANC is producing mass quantities of bioweapons, the UA pushes on to liberate the entire Chinese Arm. The Dog War begins.

2162

The UA, 3WE, and ICSC form the Allied Frontier Force (AFF). The USCSS Endeavor is destroyed by the UPP. The Tientsin Campaign begins.

2163

The UPP defends the CANC at what becomes known as "the Red Line." The Dog War ends with the Pang Ho Treaty.

2165

A nuclear strike decimates Tientsin, ending the Campaign. The Chinese Arm is dissolved and becomes known as "America's Backhand."

2170

The Marine 70 Program is instituted. The USCMC undergoes an upgrade in weapons and tactics.

2172

The UAAC launches two classified USCMC missions to the Epsilon Ceti IV and Betelgeuse systems. Australia and its extrasolar colonies rebel against the 3WE. The Australia Wars begin.

2174

The Linna 349 Campaign takes place. The USS *Sulaco* is severely damaged but not destroyed. The USCMC helps the 3WE defeat the rebels.

2179

The Hadley's Hope colony is destroyed, followed by a deadly contagion outbreak on Fiorina 161. The USS *Sulaco* goes missing. Viral outbreaks are recorded on Rim Colony, Anchorpoint, and Rodina Station. All are destroyed via quarantine protocols.

2180

The second Anchorpoint station is established. Ghost ship sightings of the USS *Sulaco* begin.

2182

The Australian Wars end with a nuclear strike on the capital city of Canberra. The Oil Wars and the Silent War begin.

2183

The UPP absorbs part of 3WE space, closing the so-called Ceti Gap. Robert Morse's *Space Beast* is transmitted and immediately banned. The USCSS *Cronus* is located adrift on the Frontier. The USCMC responds to viral outbreaks on LV-666 and Yaophora Station. The UPP refurbishes David 7 synthetics as hazardous climate troops.

2184

The USCMC puts down a revolt on Berringett's Moon. Frontier colonies are attacked by deadly bioweapons in the Border Bombings. The Oil Wars end. The UPP annexes the 61 Cygni system. The Frontier War erupts. The UPP and UA expand into each other's territories looking for evidence of bioweapon development. Mistreated colonies turn against corporations, governments, and each other. The Colony Wars begin.

2108–2109

IN THE SHADOW OF GIANTS The Torin Prime debacle showcases a weakness in the UA, and several other countries move to form conglomerate nations of their own. Already splintered by the 3WE, what is left of the EU dissolves as Germany and Spain join Russia in the creation of a new superpower—the socialist Union of Progressive Peoples (UPP).

Eager to see the United Nations Interplanetary Corps unravel, China becomes instrumental in the formation of the UPP. A conflict in ideologies prevents China from simply folding the CANC into the fledgling UPP. While the mandates of the UPP forbid interaction with corporations, the Cooperative's economy depends on the operation of corporate production facilities within their territories.

The CANC remains separate from the UPP, with China claiming time will be needed to integrate the two systems into one. Russia, Germany, and Spain are dissatisfied with China's lack of commitment, but realize that they cannot sustain the Union at this time without Chinese support.

2108–2111

PROGRESSIVE GROWTH Fed up with corporate greed, many single-nation and 3WE colonies in the spinward Outer Veil join the UPP. Others are simply annexed. The 3WE does not have the forces needed to maintain control over their colonies, so they take no action.

To combat the rising threat of socialist superpowers, the United American Outer Rim Defense (UAORD) proposes the Major Military Expansion Initiative (MMEI) to the UA Senate—a program that would fold the marines, navy, army, and aerospace branches into one extrasolar fighting force. Reactions are mixed—individual American nation-states are reluctant to give up control over their own fighting forces. The Initiative is deliberated on until the Archangel incident.

2109–2111

FALLEN ARCHANGEL Following up on the labor dispute, the troop carrier UAS *Archangel* is destroyed during a peacekeeping mission to Thedus. Over fifteen thousand military and civilian lives are lost. While the circumstances surrounding the disaster are nebulous, the event is attributed to command error. The Archangel's Captain A. Dallas is stripped of his flight license and given a dishonorable discharge. No formal criminal charges are brought to bear.

The incident is costly for the United American Outer Rim Defense—their expansion initiative is vetoed. The UAORD is instead defunded and restructured as the Outer Rim Defense Fleet—a support system designed to facilitate the transportation, defense, and supply of the other military branches. The compartmentalization of separate military branches assures that the entire system doesn't take the fall for any one incident. Expansion funding is instead allocated to the USCMC.

The UA also forms the Extrasolar Colonial Administration and the Colonial Marshal Bureau to address the needs of the colonists and prevent any civil unrest that could lead to another Torin Prime. Colonial Administration promises to open a law enforcement office on every UA colony and station within the next ten years.

2110–2181

THE AWS PROGRAM Following the loss of the UAS Archangel, the UAAC recognizes the need to have a steady supply of troops. After being denied a draft by Congress, the USCMC turns to Weyland-Yutani for viable solutions. The company initiates a program to create Artificial Womb Soldiers. Over the next seven decades, the USCMC raises three generations of soldiers whose only parents and purpose are the Corps. ■

THE 20 PARSEC LIMIT

Traffic and communication with several long distance spinward colonies is inexplicably severed. Several attempts to reach them are interrupted by massive solar ejections and radiation bursts. Soon, the trailward *Covenant* and *Affiance* colony missions are also declared overdo. Only the rimward *Concordat* mission to the Hyades Cluster is successful, establishing a network of mining colonies for Hyperdyne Systems.

2110-2112 DECLARED LOSSES Weyland-Yutani and the ORDF send out exploratory scout vessels like the *Phebe, Cronus, Mnemosyne,* and *American* to re-establish contact, only to disappear. In a joint decision, the ICC, UA and 3WE declare all worlds at a distance greater than 20 parsecs from earth as lost. Unwilling to lose the Hyades Cluster, Hyperdyne decides to support and maintain those colonies on their own.

2113 CORPORATE BAILOUTS Many major corporations who invested in the lost long-distance colonies now find themselves on the verge of declaring bankruptcy—a situation that could leave countless colonies within the 20 Parsec Limit without food, support, or jobs. As the market crashes, the UA government bails out these megacorps as corporate and political maneuvering refocuses attention closer to home. Having lost too many key member nations, the UNIC falls into obscurity.

2114 NETWORK NEWS The ICC commissions Weyland-Yutani to expand and complete Network communication coverage within ten parsecs of Sol system by 2200 and within twenty by 2300—both incredibly daunting and labor-intensive tasks that create new jobs for the economy. Until the Network is complete there will be unavoidable dead zones and message time lags within those defined limits.

2117 UNITED AGAIN Reinventing itself as a peacekeeping force amongst the stars, the UNIC becomes the United Nations Interstellar Settlements Corps (UNISC). While the UA, 3WE, and even the UPP become members, UNISC discovers the megacorporations that dominate the middle heavens do not recognize their authority. ■

THE PROBLEM WITH ANDROIDS

Weyland-Yutani's upgraded David style android—Walter—had proved to be extremely popular in the early 22nd century. It was, however, somewhat cost prohibitive. As the original Weyland Corp. patent on androids finally runs out, other companies scramble to make their own.

2120-2130

PATENT EXPIRATION AND NEW EXPLOITATION Seegson repurposes obsolete tech to create the Working Joe—a low-grade inexpensive android alternative with a manakin-like appearance.

Exploring a different angle, Hyperdyne Systems is the first manufacturer to offer synthetic models with a non-standardized appearance for the purpose of clandestine operations. One of their earlier models, the 120-A/2, borrows much from the Weyland David 7 and 8 model synaptic algorithms, resulting in neurotic and unstable behavior.

As a result of the fiasco, Hyperdyne seeks protection from the resulting liability lawsuits by relocating to Alexandria in the Central Space Consortium. By the end of the decade, all 120-A/2s are recalled and refurbished.

2130-2136

DEADLY FORCE Recognizing Seegson's success, Weyland-Yutani develops the Davis Security Drone and the Franklin Combat Synthetic—both smarter and deadlier than the Working Joe but still inhuman in appearance. Davis and Franklin units are used in many Frontier engagements—both allied with and against the colonial marines and the royal marine commandos. While W-Y and Seegson concentrate on less-than-human synthetics, Hyperdyne continues to perfect the more-human-than-human approach.

2137-2150

SYNTHETIC SECURITY Reports of rogue synthetic incidents on Sevastopol, the Europa, and elsewhere along the Frontier cause concern within the ICC. They begin an investigation into synthetic protocols that lead to the Core Conflict. The ICSC makes heavy use of android troops during this conflict.

2151-2160

ETIQUETTE AND PROTOCOL The '51 New Deal agreement stipulates that as per the Geneva Convention, synthetics are not to be used in combat roles and all new models like the upcoming Chess and Zachariah series are to be equipped with behavioral inhibitors that make it impossible for them to harm—or by omission of action, allow to be harmed—a human being. Finally, all synthetics—new and old—are required to meet the new specifications by 2160 or be retired. Newer Working Joe models are manufactured to comply with ICC protocols while the Davis and Franklin models are discontinued.

2183

THE REINVENTION OF ARTIFICIAL COMBAT The UPP discovers a cache of David 7 synthetics in deep storage on the old Weyland era Corinth Colony within their borders. In defiance of the New Deal, the synthetics are refurbished as combat androids and deployed throughout the Union. ■

BIOLOGICAL WARFARE

Throughout the 22nd century, several colonies have fallen victim to naturally occurring viruses such as the Arcturian Klerhaige and Typhen's Disorder. While the following incidents may be naturally occurring viruses, it is also possible they are the result of a corporate or government bioweapons program. The nature of the '84 Border Bombings (page 35) suggests that some outbreaks might be the work of an extraterrestrial intelligence.

2094-2110

LUNAR QUARANTINE While this outbreak began in the previous century, the 22nd century inherited its legacy. An outbreak of XMB Virus on Earth's moon forces the Olympia colony on Luna to be quarantined for sixteen years. Advanced treatments allow anyone testing negative for XMB to leave the colony, and the virus is eventually defeated. Although nothing is ever proven, evidence suggests the Earth Savers are responsible.

2137-2145

CONTAGION UNKNOWN Over the next few years, several stations and starships are quarantined and destroyed as an unidentified contagion spreads across the Frontier. The crews and colonists of Sevastopol, Mendel Station, and the Wright-Aberra fuel depot, along with the USCSS *Europa* and USCSS *Celestial* are among the casualties—as are several colonial marine companies. The nature of the contagion is classified. By 2140, the 3WE reroutes Frontier traffic through the newly christened Anchorpoint Station in the Outer Veil, and Frontier life slowly begins to return to normal.

2157-2159

NEW EARTH PLAGUE One of the longest and most successfully established colonies of the 3WE, the New Earth Colony is stricken with a terrible contagion. The so-called New Earth Plague spreads throughout the system's planetary settlements and outlying moons. The Interstellar Commerce Commission initiates quarantine protocols and orders the UA and 3WE to blockade the system.

BioNational and Weyland-Yutani scientists join forces with the USCMC Chemical Biological Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) group to find a cure, but the adaptive alien bacteria make it incurable. The ICC is left with no choice but to order a complete system sterilization. 40 million lives are lost and New Earth is abandoned, but the contagion is believed to be eradicated.

The HD85112 system is mined with detection buoys and patrolled by three Colonial Marshal frigates to prevent foolhardy scavengers from picking through the remains and inadvertently bringing the plague back to civilization.

2162-2163

THE BLIGHT OF '62 A manufactured crop blight virus used by the UA during the Dog War is accidentally spread to several Weyland era colonies, destroying the terraformed ecologies of those worlds. The Pang Ho Treaty of '63 (page 28) includes provisions for adopting the ICC's existing extrasolar organism quarantine procedures to all star-faring nations and corporations. The UA, 3WE, ICSC, and even the UPP sign. While biological weapons are not outlawed, restrictive importation laws make transporting them prohibitive.

"You want to talk about conspiracies? Ok, you've got Hadley's Hope and you've got Rim, right? Both shit colonies on the edge of nowhere, both making nothing but air and both full of wildcatters looking to strike it big. Both stop transmitting, both have the marines sent in, and both go up in a nuclear blast... but that's none of my business."

—OVERHEARD IN THE EYE OF OBLIVION BAR, ARIARCUS.

2179

YEAR OF THE DRAGON The Hadley's Hope colony on LV-426 is mysteriously destroyed, with the 2nd Battalion Bravo Team contingent attached to the USS *Sulaco* amongst the casualties. While records of the incident are incomplete, the colony is decimated in a thermonuclear explosion.

After an EEV from the *Sulaco* is traced to the Fiorina 161 colony and the prison facility there is closed due to a biological and/or chemical contaminant, it is suspected that Hadley's Hope was either the victim of a viral outbreak or was operating as a Weyland-Yutani black site for bioweapons research.

UPP Rodina Station on the border of Neroid Sector is infected with an unidentified viral contagion. Conspiracy theories suggest the Weyland-Yutani bioweapon developed at Hadley's Hope was allowed to fall into UPP hands. Sterilization protocol is initiated, and Rodina station is destroyed by the UPP battlecruiser SSV Nikolai Stoiko.

Anchorpoint I Station in UA space suffers a reactor overload shortly thereafter for reasons unknown. Later that year, the colony world of Rim also suffers an outbreak and is destroyed. Colonial Marshal investigation probes are ongoing.

2183-2184

THE NEXT WAVE The mining settlement on LV-666 suffers a viral epidemic and is lost. The lost exploration vessel USCSS *Cronus* reappears on the Frontier. A few months later, a CBRN platoon is killed when responding to a biological outbreak on Yaophora station. Containment protocols are put into effect and Yaophora is destroyed. The sole survivor, Gunnery Sergeant L. Mason reports having seen a "metal-mouthed monster" akin to Robert Morse's *Space Beast*. Survivors of outbreaks on other worlds make similar reports. These claims are all dismissed as delusions. Unsubstantiated reports suggest a connection to the *Cronus*, but no correlation is confirmed. ■

THE CORE CONFLICT

During the 2140s, the Interstellar Commerce Commission launched an investigation into mega-corporation secret holdings, synthetic protocols, and black sites—causing them to take a long hard look at the Central Space Consortium (CSC).

2147

THE REVOLT OF ALEXANDRIA Formed in the 2080s, the CSC is a corporate-run state within the 3WE with special tax incentives and a lot to hide. Rather than submit to a long-avoided ICC review regarding the 120-A/2 series synthetics, the Hyperdyne Systems controlled Consortium world of Alexandria declares its independence from the 3WE. Reluctant to risk damaging this jewel world in a civil war, the 3WE declines to retaliate against Alexandria.

2148-2150

POKING THE SLEEPING BEAR (2148–2150) Following Hyperdyne's lead, the other company-owned colonies of the Central Space Consortium also declare their independence. The 3WE is powerless to stop the rebellion until the UA is drawn into the conflict by the succession of planet Helene 215—the location of a USCMC foreign headquarters base. Concerned with matter on the home front, Hyperdyne limits supply runs to the Hyades Cluster, leaving those colonies without food or support.

The UAAC swiftly blockades all trade routes in and out of the disputed territories—effectively cutting off both the 3WE and the Consortium from much needed food and supply colonies. For two years, the USCMC and the RMC battle the Consortium's combat synthetics in ground and fleet engagements. Finally, all parties agree to talk.

2151

THE '51 NEW DEAL UA forces, the 3WE and the rebel Consortium sign a UNISC agreement with the Interstellar Commerce Commission. Called "The New Deal," this contract returns Helene 215 to the Three World Empire and offers 3WE wholesale pricing on goods produced within the Consortium. In return, the 3WE acknowledges the Consortium's independence as the newly formed Inner Core System Colonies (ICSC)—but only as a UNISC member nation in good standing. The Consortium complies. Synthetics are banned from combat and the ICC drops its investigation into Hyperdyne and the Consortium's other corporate members. The UA loosens the blockade on what is now ICSC space just enough to regulate but not stop the flow of goods, colonists, and credits in and out of the fledgling ICSC.

2151-2153

THE HELENE UPRISING Unwilling to accept the terms of the New Deal, Governor K. Watabe requests military aid from the UPP to help push the USCMC and Royal Marine Commandos off Helene 215. A ground war is fought against the rebellious Tokonigara and Shinowa colonies and their UPP allies. The two marine forces drive the Cooperative off-world and restore order.

2154-2155

THE KHADAJI CAMPAIGN The USCMC raids the Lebanon II colony in the 3WE Khadaji system, destroying a secret UPP supply base planetside. The UA annexes the system and claims the rights to Helene 215 as well, declaring the takeovers "a matter of colonial security." The UPP leaves the UNISC.

2156-2161

REPERCUSSIONS: THE POPULIST MOVEMENT Fed up with corporate neglect and abuse during the Core Conflict, the Hyades Cluster mining colonies revolt and secede to the UPP. Hyperdyne lobbies the UA to intervene despite the 20 Parsec Limit. The USCMC clashes with the UPP over these worlds. This continues until the UPP/UA ceasefire of '65. ■

THE ARCTURIAN POLICE ACTIONS

Prior to 2124, confirmed records of extraterrestrial life had been limited to smaller organisms such as microbes, flat worms and large insects. While exploring Arcturus in the Alpha Boötis system, a W-Y expeditionary mission encounters the Arcturians—a race of near-human extraterrestrials. After months of establishing a common language together, the Arcturians disclose that humans are not their first visitors from the stars. A cultural and technological exchange begins.

2128-2157

THE SCIENCE OF TRADE (2128–2157) Though the Arcturians exist in a pre-industrial society, W-Y trade with them leads to many advances in life and astrophysical sciences. A trading outpost with a marshal's office is set up planetside and the Arcturus Loop is established—a Chinese Arm trade route that slips through the CANC border near the Tientsin Colony, bypassing both ICC and CANC security and creating a smuggler's run in and out of CANC space.

Unaware of the unsanctioned trade going on within its borders, the CANC expands its contracts with Weyland-Yutani, Hyperdyne Systems, and the Jĭngtì Lóng Corporation, dedicating entire factory worlds to producing consumer goods for the UA and 3WE. The Chinese Arm continues to grow as the CANC prospers.

2158

OPERATION ARCTURAN SHIELD The CANC discovers the illegal movement of people, arms, and goods through the Arcturus Loop. The Cooperative seizes any ships traveling along the route and invades the Alpha Boötis system. When the CANC sets up a comfort station and garrison on Arcturus, Weyland-Yutani appeals to the UA for support, accusing the CANC of taking advantage of the indigenous Arcturians.

The UA Senate greenlights Operation Arcturan Shield. The Aerospace Force and Defense Fleet blockade the Alpha Boötis system, leaving the Cooperative planetside garrison with no reinforcements.

Over the next several months, the CANC Fleet unsuccessfully attempts to run the blockade. Finally, the CANC withdraws, but refuses to surrender their claim to the Arcturus Loop.

2159

OPERATION ARCTURAN FREEDOM USCMC landing forces storm the CANC planetside Xian Po garrison and Li Huan comfort station in what will be remembered as Operation Arcturan Freedom. Weyland-Yutani contributes to the war effort and sends their own science teams as advisors to the planetside platoons. When an assault team removes the entrenched CANC Governor-General C. Xú from power, the Arcturians are freed—although much of their culture and historical monuments are destroyed in the process. ■

THE BATTLE FOR THE CHINESE ARM

After Operation Arcturan Freedom, a treaty is signed with the Arcturan people, providing humanitarian aid and relief to the planet. As Arcturus becomes a UA protectorate, a permanent W-Y trading post and Colonial Marine R&R station are set up planetside. The CANC imposes severe trade sanctions on the UA, 3WE, and ICSC—all capitalist powers who rely on their factory worlds for production—an action that leads to the Dog War.

2160-2163

THE DOG WAR When the Jǐngti Lóng Corporation presents evidence that the CANC is stockpiling bioweapons and testing them on political prisoners, the United Americas is forced to act.

The UAAC commits its entire armed forces and pushes into the Chinese Arm, annexing territory from the CANC in order to "protect the interests of the free colonies." Named for its location in the Canes Venatici constellation, this conflict for control of the Chinese Arm becomes known as the Dog War.

2162

THE ALLIED FRONTIER FORCE The Colonial Marines instate a draft on the colonies as they fight to monitor and maintain newly acquired UA territory. When a Weyland-Yutani civilian contractor team exposes a CANC bioweapons production facility, UNISC member nations pledge their forces to the UA cause, creating the Allied Frontier Force (AFF).

2163

CROSSING THE RED LINE Faced with overwhelming opposition, China calls upon the UPP for aid. The Union offers the Cooperative sanctuary and deploys forces to hold the AFF Advance at what becomes known as the Red Line, but will not commit to defending the entire Chinese Arm.

The Cooperative Fleet is forced to retreat Spinward over the next two years, surrendering territory to the UA. When AFF forces reach the Red Line, the UPP joins the conflict. Major battles are fought at O'Bannon's World, Plymouth, and Sahara with no clear victory.

2162-2165

THE TIENTSIN CAMPAIGN As new borders are formed, the governing body on the Frontier world of 8 Eta Boötis A III vows allegiance to the UA. Enraged that their leaders would simply roll over, former CANC loyalists enlist UPP aid and stage a coup. The UA considers a diplomatic approach, until the UPP accuses the USCSS *Endeavor* of espionage and blatantly destroys the commercial survey ship.

As the UA sends in forces to support the old regime, a protracted ground war dubbed the Tientsin Campaign is fought between the United Americas and the UPP, culminating in the use of strategic nukes which ravage the planet's ecosystem. After the carnage, a ceasefire is called and both forces withdraw. ■

2163

AN EXPERIMENT IN PEACE The CANC sues for peace, and the AFF halts its advance at the Red Line. The Pang Ho Treaty is signed, and the Chinese Arm is broken up into UA and Chinese territories, with the remaining CANC sectors being absorbed into the UPP. For their help in the war, the Jǐngtì Lóng Corporation and other major ICSC holding corporations are awarded contracts to exploit former CANC worlds for the UA. Weyland-Yutani and Lasalle Bionational are joint-contracted to dismantle and dispose of the Cooperative's bioweapon factories and stores. The 3WE is awarded the territory of the former Chinese Canal, a route through their space to the now extinct Chinese Arm. The AFF disbands.

2164

THE BORDERLINE REGION A Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) is established along the Red Line. Called the Borderline Region, this DMZ is a wild frontier that exists outside of designated territories. Each world is allowed to govern itself—though none are allowed to maintain a military presence. The DMZ is roughly one parsec wide and six parsecs long. A joint UA/UPP Constabulary composed of colonial marshals and the people's armed police is designated to maintain order there.

2163-2165

THE COOPERATIVE EXODUS As the Tientsin Campaign rages on, CANC forces and loyal civilians are given two years to leave the territory of the former Chinese Arm. Under UAAC escort, Cooperative refugees mount a massive exodus to the UPP border. CANC colonists that wish to stay are granted US citizenship but are placed on a government watch list. Jǐngtì Lóng Corporation founds the colony world of New China within ICSC space and opens colonization to any former Cooperative refugees who wish to avoid both the UPP and the UA. Having increased in territory and armed might by absorbing what's left of the CANC and annexing worlds, the UPP calls the 2100s the "Progressive Century." ■

TO THE VICTOR THE SPOILED

In 2165, the nuclear decimated Tientsin Colony is granted its independence. The UPP and the UA both pull out of 8 Eta Boötis A, and a state of Cold War forms between the two superpowers. The Colonial Marine Corps reaches a peak of 240,000 personnel—troops with no one to fight. The Artificial Womb Soldier (AWS) Program is discontinued (page 164). Existing underage AWS will continue to be raised and trained until they can enter full service.

2166-2175

THE REFORTIFICATION OF AMERICA'S BACKHAND The last wave of Cooperative refugees leave UA space and the former Chinese Arm is folded into the American Arm. The area is colloquially referred to as "America's Backhand." As a UPP member state, the CANC is on the fast track to becoming a major power within the Union—prompting UA concern that the UPP may attempt to retake the former Chinese Arm. The UAAC fortifies the territory, building shipyards and bases within the dense stars of the Crestus Cluster. Fortification will not be complete until 2175.

2167

THE '67 BUYOUT Corporate-awarded worlds within the New American Territory are caught applying for ICSC status. The UA imposes new trade embargoes and blockades against the Inner Core System Colonies. Several corporate contracts are revoked as the USCMC reclaims these production worlds and escorts the companies responsible—including the Jīngtì Lóng Corporation—out of the sector.

Weyland-Yutani is awarded production control of the reclaimed colonies. Many corporations face bankruptcy in the process, but Weyland-Yutani is there to buy them out. Companies like Hyperdyne Systems are forced to sell their major shares to Weyland-Yutani and become subsidiaries.

2170-2171

THE MARINE 70 PROGRAM After analyzing the past decade of combat, the colonial marines instigate the Marine 70 Program—a weapons procurement and restructuring initiative to develop new combat technologies and battle strategies. The M577 Armored Personnel Carrier and an upgraded Cheyenne dropship result from this.

The M41A Pulse Rifle is adopted by the Colonial Marine Corps, replacing the Harrington Assault Rifle. Hyperdyne Systems introduces the model 341-B synthetic, and the USCMC orders one for every platoon—for service in a non-combatant role.

Hyperdyne regains majority shares and leaves Weyland-Yutani, once again becoming a power in their own right. Hyperdyne Systems is restructured as the Hyperdyne Corporation. In a coup, W-Y manages to hold on to the 314-B designer, Michael Bishop. ■

THE RIMWARD EXPANSION

As corporate exploitation teams push forward into the unknown both within-and-without the 20 Parsec Limit, the USCMC acts as an escort and protector, clearing out dangerous fauna and flora for scientific expeditions and new colonies.

2151-2167

REDEFINING THE FRONTIER Weyland-Yutani and Hyperdyne aggressively establish new mining and research outposts, terraforming whole worlds in a race to outdo each other on the expanding frontier. With the constant conflicts between the UA, CANC, and the UPP, these colonies are spread too thin for the Colonial Marines to protect. Expansion slows with the '67 Buyout.

2172-2177

THE BATTLE OF CETI EPSILON IV AND THE BETELGEUSE CAMPAIGN Epsilon Ceti and Betelgeuse—the battles that everyone has heard of, but no one knows anything about. In 2172, the USCMC assembles four companies of marines into two fleets and deploys them on classified long-distance missions to systems far outside the 20 Parsec Limit. Most combatants are required to undergo a medpod procedure that erases their memories of these conflicts—allegedly to protect them from psychological trauma.

Little information is made available to the public. Several court-martials and psychological discharges are recorded, but the transcripts of the cases are locked away to be released in twenty years' time. Amongst the participants, numerous suicides and unexplained deaths take place. The survivors are either promoted or reassigned to remote outposts on long-term contracts. ■

THE HUNTING OF BUGS

The prevalent form of life in the cosmos would appear to be insects—both small and large. And when cockroaches the size of poodles start chewing on colonies or colonists, you can guess who gets called in to play exterminator. It's a duty that no marine wants but every marine gets stuck with. Over the years, this kind of work has become synonymous with the term "bug hunt." As rebel factions make up the most commonly faced—and annoying—human adversaries on the frontier as well, bug hunt can also apply to flushing out entrenched hostiles—as opposed to a "straight-up fight" of soldier vs. soldier.

THE WAR AT HOME

After a severe and prolonged food shortage, Australia attempts to secede from the Three World Empire. What follows is a rise in malcontent activity on several Australian founded colonies.

2172-2182

THE AUSTRALIA WARS Food riots in Australia lead to widespread fighting and a government take-over by rebels. The 3WE commits its forces to retaking the country. These long running Australia Wars finally end when the UA intervenes by nuking the capital city of Canberra. The rebels surrender and the country's legitimate government is restored. The 3WE is kept from disintegrating into splinter nations—but once again only thanks to their allies, the United Americas.

2174-2175

BATTLE OF THE BUG BOYS—THE LINNA 349 CAMPAIGN Inspired by the Australian revolt, Rebel factions stage a coup on Linna 349. Once again, the Three World Empire requests assistance from the United Americas Allied Command. A peacekeeping force of colonial marines is sent in.

The conflict escalates when the rebels—derogatively referred to as "Bug Boys"—receive a weapons upgrade from an unidentified source. Although never proven, UA Intelligence suggests the Hyperdyne Corporation. When the USCMC frigate USS Sulaco becomes the target of an orbital strike, the Colonial Marines commit to retaking the colony. They squash the Bug Boys and leave a peacekeeping force on Linna 349, despite requests from the Three World Empire to release the world. Linna 349 becomes the third 3WE colony to be undermined by the UA. ■

FANATICAL FRONTIER

Quasi-religious cults and terrorist groups spring from Earth to take root on the Frontier, sending leaders to the most destitute and backwater colonies in search of new acolytes. Recruiters encourage colonists to shed the oppressive yoke of their atheistic corporate masters and prepare for the coming of judgment day. What follows is a brief look at some of those conflicts.

2104

ATTACK ON THE COVENANT After their possible involvement in the XBT virus, the Earth Savers movement attempts to sabotage the USCSS *Covenant* and several other long distance colony missions to prevent mankind from reaching further out into the stars. The organization is broken up, but not all members are captured.

2105-2106

TECHNOLOGICAL DEVOLUTION A religious eco-terrorist group calling themselves the Monastic Order of Arceon creates an invasive computer virus that eliminates data stores across the Earth. After setting off several electromagnetic pulses in major cities, they are apprehended by a joint Colonial Marine and Royal Marine Commando strike force. The computer virus is neutralized before it reaches other worlds. W-Y buys out the terrorists' sentences and exiles the remnants of the Arceon group to a repurposed Class V habitation sphere in the Far Reach.

2115

EBERUS INCIDENT Former J'Har rebels turned terrorists take hostage the Weyland-Yutani shuttle Eberus. The situation is resolved with limited bloodshed by company civilian negotiator E. Ripley before a USCMC response team can intervene. Forty-nine hostages are rescued, and eight terrorists are convicted.

2176

HAARSA HOSTAGE CRISIS (2176) A militant group takes hostages on Haarsa Colony. Most of the colonists are rescued by the USCMC. Unfortunately, the terrorists are killed before their motives can be discerned.

2183

INDOCTRINATION PROTOCOL The Colonial Marshal Bureau begins investigating the more extreme fanatic groups on the Frontier as potential terrorists. As groups like the Millenarian Doomsayers begin founding their own colonies, USCMC forces policing the region are called in to maintain order on vulnerable worlds.

2183-2184

THE OIL WARS Rogue elements nuke key supply colonial oil reserves both on Earth and throughout the colonies. UA, UPP, and 3WE expeditionary forces scramble to find new raw sources of oil as petroleum resources across the territories are fought over by various powers.

As the battle for dominance over petrol worlds intensifies, retreating forces poison the so-called "black gold colonies" by introducing an oil-eating bacteria to the wells that was originally developed to clean up oil spills. Resources dwindle more. The Oil Wars end as the petrol rich ICSC establishes diplomatic ties and begins selling oil to all parties equally in exchange for lifted trade sanctions.

While the Practitioners of the Holy Immolation claim responsibility for the initial nuclear attacks, there is no evidence to support their involvement. The FBI investigation is ongoing. ■

THE COLD WAR INTENSIFIES

Tensions flare on the Frontier as factions accuse each other of foul play following the Hadley's Hope and Rodina incidents. Colonial Administration investigates the possible involvement of both Weyland-Yutani and the UPP. The Cold War between the UPP and the UA escalates. Several near incidents occur on the UA/UPP border as the two superpowers probe each other for weaknesses. The final crop of USCMC Artificial Womb Soldiers enters the service. The program is terminated.

2182-2183 **THE SILENT WAR** A conflict erupts between Weyland-Yutani and rival Globe Corporation to control worlds within the ICSC. The so-called Silent War is waged behind the population's back. Although this is a corporate conflict, the USCMC is brought in on Weyland-Yutani's side, tipping the scales in W-Y's favor.

2183 **THE CETI GAP** As the UPP moves to annex an area of 3WE space in the Outer Veil, holding actions erupt across the sector. Hyperdyne's Groombridge and Zeus Colonies are evacuated. A truce is declared when UPP forces make planetfall on Nene 246 in the 52 Tau Ceti system—the location of a USCMC Ezell foreign military base. In an unprecedented move, the UPP allows the UA to continue to use Nene 246 as a base of operations alongside a UPP contingent. ■

THE FRONTIER WAR

2184 Now. 2184 is a FUBAR year for the USCMC. As the Oil Wars wrap up, fanatics engage in terrorist activities, enemy forces invade our worlds and biological bombs are dropped on unsuspecting colonies.

"If you want a picture of the future, imagine a boot stamping on a human face—forever."

— GEORGE ORWELL, 1984

THE BERRINGETT CONFLICT After years of unsafe work conditions, 200 armed disgruntled workers seize control of a Hyperdyne palladium mine on Berringett's Moon and make demands for better treatment. When the local colonial marshal office attempts to restore order, the corporate agent sent to negotiate is killed in the resulting fiasco.

The USCMC is called in to end the standoff. What starts as a smooth hit and run operation turns into a protracted standoff when a typhoon hits the colony, trapping both the hostages and the malcontents in the flooded mine. When all is said and done, the mine is destroyed and 52 colonists are dead.

UPP INVASION The UPP takes advantage of the colonial unrest to begin annexing rebellious UA worlds closest to their borders. LV-038 is the first to be taken. The UAAC sends two fleets to engage the UPP there—the war is on.

THE BORDER BOMBINGS Starting with LV-038, several colonies along the Frontier are obliterated by bioweapon attacks perpetrated by unknown parties. The United Americas believe the UPP is behind these Border Bombings—but the UPP has suffered massive losses as well, and in truth the Union likely does not have the level of technology necessary for these attacks. The question isn't just who is bombing these worlds—but why?

ESCALATION The Frontier becomes a war zone as the United Americas and the Union of Progressive Peoples clash over new territories. The UA initiates a draft on the Frontier—the first one in over twenty years. Spurred on by the Border Bombings, factions within the USCMC and the UPP begin raiding outpost worlds suspected of conducting any and all bioweapon research on either side of the border.

THE COLONY WARS Dissatisfied with both their corporate overlords and the Colonial Marines' inability to protect the Frontier, several UA and 3WE colonies begin to rebel across the Frontier. The armed forces are called in to combat civil unrest, and successfully stave off worker revolts on New Titan and Europa.

Angry that their supply chains and support have been cut off by the UA conflict with the UPP, Frontier colonies begin raiding each other for food and medicine. Supplied with weapons from the UPP, Lebanon II, Linna 349, Ariarcus, Rigel 9, Wakahashi's World, and more become powder kegs ready to go off. ■

ORGANIZATION

"All right, sweethearts, you're a team and there's nothin' to worry about. We come here, and we gonna conquer, and we gonna kick some, is that understood? That's what we gonna do, sweethearts, we are going to go and get some. All right, people, on the ready line!"

—MASTER SGT. AL APONE, 2ND BATTALION BRAVO TEAM

Ok, Marine—time to learn your ABCs, USMCs, UAACs, and all the other sets of initials that come with that uniform. You've got to know who's who, who's in charge, and who is just some milktoast CO who's throwing weight around he doesn't have. Oh, and that's right—you better pay attention, because there's gonna be a test later—it's called throwing you into the thick of it on the ready line. ■

UNITED STATES COLONIAL MARINE CORPS

EXPEDITIONARY WARFARE, FORCE PROJECTION, RECONNAISSANCE, INTERPLANETARY STRIKE

The elite fighting force of the United Americas, the United States Colonial Marine Corps is the primary UA force on the Outer Rim and Frontier. The colonial marines maintain an advanced state of readiness at all times in order to provide rapid deployment to any and all commitments within their theaters of operation and beyond.

While the USCMC works in sync with the United States Aerospace Force (USASF) and sometimes in tandem with the Latin American Colonial Navy (LACN) and the Outer Rim Defense Fleet (ORDF), they are the only US military branch capable of deploying an independent dedicated task force without support from another branch. Unfortunately, the USCMC suffered severe losses at the onset of the Border Bombings—several Battalions and their accompanying starships.

OPERATIONAL THEATERS

The United States Colonial Marine Corps is divided into three main Marine Space Forces (MSF) composed of calculated combat, support, and service elements that, when combined, are capable of executing both decisive orbital assault missions and sustained surface operations. Each MSF provides security for a designated operating theater, but in truth these areas often overlap—marines don't care whose backyard the fight is in, they're ready to hop fences as needed. In 2180 the divisions were restructured to account for the rapid expansion of the Frontier, deviating from their traditional operational territories.

- **MARINE SPACE FORCE, SOL:** Core Systems. Equipped with a second division that specifically protects the Sol system itself, MSF SOL has a major base at Rigel Kentaurus and is responsible for operations throughout the core systems, including maintaining the blockade of the ICSC border.
- **MARINE SPACE FORCE, ERIDANI:** Outer Veil, Rimward Frontier. This division operates along the Anglo-Japanese arm, the Tartarus Sector, and as deep into the Far Reach of the American Arm as Alpha Caeli. MSF ERIDANI also operates the only USCMC base within UPP space at 52 Tau Ceti.
- **MARINE SPACE FORCE, HERCULIS:** Outer Rim, Coreward Frontier. Under siege from both the UPP and the perpetrators of the enigmatic Border Bombings, MSF Herculis protects the American Corridor, Advance, and the hotly contented Borderline Region—as well as the Coreward American Arm. Recently, reserves have been activated and sent to Herculis to augment their forces.

COMMAND BREAKDOWN

Each marine Division is further broken down into regiments, battalions, companies, and platoons. It's at the platoon level that the PCs start to get involved. This command structure has existed since the inception of the Colonial Marines, although a proposed restructuring of units down to the fireteam—changing a team from two Marines to three—is on the table.

PLATOON

A USCMC platoon is made up of 24 Colonial Marines (two sections of twelve each), plus its commander and adjutant.

COMMAND TEAM: A Colonial Marine platoon is run by a platoon commander that controls two sections. Usually a Lieutenant or Captain, the platoon commander is assisted by either an officer of lesser rank or a service synthetic with a non-combatant rank equivalent to Warrant Officer. Sometimes the platoon commander will accompany a Section into combat, taking the Sergeant's place in the APC and bumping them to squad commander.

SECTION

A platoon is divided into two sections. Each section typically has a dropship, an APC, two squads, plus a support team and a tactical team.

SUPPORT TEAM: The support team drops your ass in the frying pan and then pulls you out before you fall into the fire. They keep the dropship hot and ready for dust off.

TACTICAL TEAM: The tactical team supports the section by providing coordination, cover fire and extraction. A sergeant or senior officer coordinates their team from the APC's TAC center with their driver ready to assist the squads as needed. If the section sergeant intends to accompany their squads, a gunner will sometimes be assigned to the tactical team. In special circumstances, the command team may enter the field of operations and command the section from the APC.

COMMAND TEAM:
- Platoon Commander
- Command Adjutant or Android

LIEUTENANT

CAPTAIN

WARRANT OFFICER

SUPPORT TEAM:
- Pilot
- Crew Chief

TACTICAL TEAM:
- Section Sergeant or Gunner
- AFV Driver

PILOT

SERGEANT (SECTION COMMANDER)

STAFF SERGEANT (PLATOON SECOND-IN-COMMAND)

GUNNERY SERGEANT (COMPANY SECOND-IN-COMMAND)

MASTER SERGEANT (OPERATIONS CHIEF)

FIRST SERGEANT (OPERATIONS CHIEF)

MASTER GUNNERY SERGEANT (OPERATIONS CHIEF)

SERGEANT MAJOR (BATTALION OR SQUADRON SECOND-IN-COMMAND)

RIFLE TEAM:	▸ Rifleman ▸ Hospital Corpsman
Gun Team:	▸ Automatic Rifleman (Smartgun Operator) ▸ Combat Technician

PRIVATE FIRST CLASS
(TEAM MEMBER)

LANCE
CORPORAL
(TEAM LEADER)

CORPORAL
(SQUAD LEADER)

HOSPITAL
CORPSMAN

SQUADS

Each section has two squads, and there are two fireteams to a squad—usually a rifle team and a gun team.

FIRETEAMS

A two-Marine team is called a fireteam and works on the buddy system—your fireteam member has your back and you've got theirs. Fireteams can be designated rifle teams, gun teams, recon teams, assault teams, and more.

RIFLE TEAM: The rifle team is responsible for fire power, medical support, and coordinating objectives with command. Typically, someone other than the automatic rifleman will be squad leader with the rank Lance Corporal or above. The remainder of the squad are of subordinate rank.

GUN TEAM: Here comes the big guns to keep the enemy's head down while the squad moves in.

Alternatively, a squad can be composed of Recon, Assault, or CBRN specialist fireteams.

SPECIALTY FIRETEAMS

RECON TEAM: Obscured by camouflage ghillie suits, this fireteam takes the high ground and gets the lay of the terrain before the unit enters the field—identifying and targeting potential threats before the others rush in where angels fear to tread. The Forward Observer will utilize enhanced vision gear, a silenced motion tracker—and sometimes even passive Pups—to locate targets for the dedicated marksman to eliminate (see the Gear chapters in this book and the core rulebook for more on these).

ASSAULT TEAM: Designed for urban pacification, the assault team breaches doors, takes out security systems, and neutralizes enemy encampments with heavy ordnance. Combat technicians assigned to an assault team bypass doors, tripwires, and security systems. Assault Marines utilize RPGs, rubber U1 rounds, plastisteel shields, electroshock grenades, and shaped charges to achieve their objectives.

CBRN TEAM: The Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear defense fireteam can be called in to clean up a spill, deactivate a dirty bomb, contain an outbreak, or to establish and enforce ICC quarantine procedures. A CBRN team is equipped with HAZMAT anti-contamination suits, detection and analysis equipment, incinerators, and firebomb U4 rounds (Chapter 5). CBRN combat technicians are trained to diffuse bombs and safely shut down fusion reactors/drives as well as bypass electronic defenses. ■

RECON TEAM:	▸ Forward Observer ▸ Dedicated Marksman (rank of Lance Corporal or above)
ASSAULT TEAM:	▸ Assault Marine Breacher (M5 RPG Operator) ▸ Combat Technician
CBRN TEAM:	▸ CBRN Defense Specialist ▸ Combat Technician

CBRN DEFENSE SPECIALIST

OTHER UA MILITARY BRANCHES

These are, of course, even more UA member state military branches than those listed here—for example, the United States Army still exists—but the ones included in this list are the big players in the Frontier War.

UNITED AMERICAS ALLIED COMMAND (UAAC)

STRATEGIC COMMAND, TACTICAL OPERATIONS

The overarching joint command of all UA militaries—all United States, Latin America, and Canadian armed forces operate under the UAAC. They operate a small contingent of troops and vessels out of both Sol and Crestus Garrison Prime, primarily to act as security for the secretary of state and command staff. The UAAC often forms task forces composed of any and all branches of the UA military.

A NOTE FROM MU/TH/UR: While their agendas are rarely in conflict, it's important to remember that UAAC orders always supersede the orders of any military branch—including the USCMC. The UAAC are the top brass and they get the final word. Period.

UAAC MEDALS

Marines, Navy, and Armed Forces alike—the UAAC runs—and rewards—them all. Do a good job, marine, and they are likely to pin something on your chest. Here's a few you might see in your lifetime—if not after the fact.

- **MEDAL OF HONOR: Most prestigious United American military decoration.**
- **GALACTIC CROSS: Second highest medal, valor under fire**
- **SILVER STAR: Third highest medal, awarded for gallantry in action.**
- **BRONZE STAR: Heroic and/or life-saving achievement**
- **MEDAL OF VALOR: Bravery on the battlefield.**
- **PURPLE HEART: Wounded or killed in combat. Expect to see these a lot.**
- **SERVICE CROSS: Awarded for long-time service. Give your life to the Corps. and you might see one before 50.**
- **SERVICE RIBBON: You aren't going to be walking around wearing medals on base, so instead you get these little ribbons to take their place. Of course, in a methane mudhole you aren't going to be wearing ribbons either, so just remember to dress for success.**

UNITED STATES AEROSPACE FORCE (USASF)

AEROSPACE WARFARE, SURVEILLANCE, RAPID MOBILITY, INTERSTELLAR STRIKE

The USASF is the aerospace warfare service branch of the UAAC, specializing in small craft missions. The USASF chiefly operates dropship, fightercraft, and both intra and exosystem support and mobility for the USCMC in the form of Colonial Marine Aerospace Wings assigned to most major Marine bases. They produce the best pilots in the territories and their EVAC Fighter is unparalleled in aerospace combat.

CANADIAN COLONIAL ARMED FORCES (CCAF)

AMPHIBIOUS WARFARE, SURFACE DOMINANCE, PLANETARY SECURITY AND DEFENSE

The CCAF are the sea and ground pounders of the UAAC, operating in any environment on the surface of a planet or moon. Transported by the Latin American Colonial Navy, the Canadian Colonial Armed Forces are often deployed to important core worlds and only moved to the Outer Rim by the LACN during open conflicts. Unlike the USCMC, the CCAF does not possess space fighting capabilities and has very limited zero gravity training—it is a surface force only.

LATIN AMERICAN COLONIAL NAVY (LACN)

INTERSTELLAR WARFARE, INTRASYSTEM DEFENSE, BLOCKADE ENFORCEMENT, SPACELIFT

The most capable navy in civilized space, the LACN was recently augmented and expanded to absorb the United States Navy. The Colonial Navy has top of the line ships and often works in tandem with Marine Space Force Eridani. During peacetime, the Latin American Colonial Navy patrols the Core systems and American Corridor, although they do operate an Outer Rim Territory shipyard in the Epsilon Reticuli system. Much of the Navy's resources are tied up in the blockades around the Inner Core System Colonies. With the outbreak of the Border Bombings, the LACN has lost three complete fleets.

OUTER RIM DEFENSE FLEET (ORDF)

POWER PROJECTION, MASSIVE DETERRENCE, SPACELIFT, INTERSTELLAR WARFARE

Just as the Colonial Marines come from the United States contingent of the United Americas, the Outer Rim Defense Fleet was formed and is maintained by the American Outer Rim colonies. The ORDF was intended to become the one unified armed force of the UA, but the PR disaster that was the loss of the UAS Archangel in 2109 made it clear to the government that it was better off having individual state-controlled militaries. Just as its name implies, the ORDF patrols and protects the Outer Rim territories. As the LACN bases in the Outer Rim have proven successful and reliable, the usefulness of the ORDF had recently come into question—a question that has now been nullified by the outbreak of the Frontier War. ■

OTHER UA ORGANIZATIONS

These are other UA allies a Colonial Marine is likely to connect with in the American Arm and on the Frontier.

COLONIAL MARSHAL BUREAU (CMB)

LAW ENFORCEMENT, BORDER PATROL, HOMEWORLD SECURITY

Sometimes called the Office of Colonial Marshals, the marshals are the law enforcement arm of colonial administration. They are the only authority on most frontier settlements—assuming the colony is large enough to even rate one. Those who don't are protected by corporate appointed security. Bureau offices range in size from a single colony sheriff to an entire company of officers operating out of a border patrol frigate. Marshals work in tandem with the ICC, FBI, and the USCCG.

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION (FBI)

CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION, COUNTERINTELLIGENCE, COUNTERTERRORISM

The internal intelligence and security service of the United Americas, the FBI hasn't changed much in the past two centuries, save to increase their influence from the United States to encompass all UA colonies. Amongst other things, this federal law enforcement agency investigates mass property damage, mass murders, and potential domestic terrorist threats.

UNITED AMERICAN COLONIAL GUARD (UACG)

RESERVE FORCE, CIVIC ACTION, DISASTER RELIEF

This reserve force of colonists is usually only activated to assist in natural disaster relief or in times of civil unrest to augment the Colonial Marshal Bureau. The Colonial Guard has received only basic CCAF training.

UNITED STATES COLONIAL COAST GUARD (USCCG)

INTERSTELLAR CUSTOMS AND TRADE REGULATION, MIGRANT INTERDICTION, SEARCH AND RESCUE

In coordination with the Interstellar Commerce Commission (ICC), the USCCG operates and patrols along the American Corridor, along the Inner Core System Colonies border, and around high population UA colonies as system defense forces. As the Coast Guard is considered to have local jurisdiction, most of their vessels are sublight cutters. The Coast Guard follows strict ICC search, impoundment, and quarantine protocols. For more on the ICC, see page 234 of the core rulebook. ■

FORCES OF THE THREE WORLD EMPIRE

ROYAL MARINE COMMANDOS (RMC)

EXPEDITIONARY WARFARE, FORCE PROTECTION, INTERSTELLAR STRIKE

The RMC is a dedicated elite fighting force of the 3WE—or would be, were they ever allowed to deploy. For nearly two decades now the 3WE has backed down from every engagement, be it with rebellious colonies, the UPP, or even the UA. The Royal Marine Commandos are itching for a real fight and might be a little eager to pull the trigger.

IMPERIAL ARMED SPACE FORCES (IASF)

AEROSPACE WARFARE, BLOCKADE ENFORCEMENT, INTERPLANETARY DEFENSE

The IASF is the all-purpose armed, aerospace, and fleet force of the 3WE. They regularly see action along the ICSC border of New Eden Sector, preventing smugglers from breaking through the blockade. They also serve as system guards, protecting prestigious worlds of the 3WE. ■

ICSC AND CORPORATE FORCES

WEYLAND-YUTANI COMMANDOS

PROJECT SECURITY, DIRECT ACTION, UNCONVENTIONAL WARFARE

Sometimes called gorillas by Colonial Marines because of the APE suits they wear, Weyland-Yutani commandos are the cream of the corporate crop. Typically, Weyland-Yutani will pick up the contract of a military veteran with no compunctions about murder and groom them for corporate black-ops.

Unlike typical PMCs, the W-Y Commandos are a full-time security force maintained in house. The infamous Weyland-Yutani Dog Catchers are a subgroup of these commandos, responsible for extrasolar animal control. See page 237 in the core rulebook for more about the Dog Catchers.

CENTRAL SPACE CONSORTIUM PRIVATE MILITARY CONTRACTORS (CSC PMC)

BLACK OPERATIONS, FORCE PROJECTION, SECURITY FORCE ASSISTANCE

The CSC PMCs are private organizations that provide security services or military training for the Inner Core System Colonies. They are a mixed bag of elite and novice mercenaries who often don't work well with other units. At the end of the day, it all depends on who sponsored them and for how much—CEOs employ top rate PMCs, but those contracted by low level corporate agents are likely to be rank amateurs. ■

UPP ARMED COLLECTIVE

The socialist empire of the stars, the UPP independent nation states together have assembled the largest human military force ever conceived.

THE UNION OF PROGRESSIVE PEOPLE'S ARMY (UPPA)

SURFACE WARFARE, MASSIVE DETERRENCE, PLANETARY SECURITY AND DEFENSE, INTERPLANETARY ASSAULT

The People's Army is the heavily armed, highly organized fighting force of the Union of Progressive Peoples. Upon reaching adulthood, it is the duty of every Union citizen to serve in the UPPA for five years—meaning most of the army is composed of regular people doing their duty and nothing more. As such, they are only adequately trained and easily convinced to surrender when their lives are in serious danger. What the UPPA lacks in dedication, it makes up for in numbers.

SPACE OPERATING FORCES (SOF)

INTERSTELLAR WARFARE, POWER PROJECTION, RAPID DEPLOYMENT, SURFACE DOMINANCE, SPACELIFT

Specializing in Zero-G combat, the SOF is the Union's answer to the USCMC. They are a first response group to any aggression against a UPP allied colony. The SOF maintains its own star fleets and also acts as a UPP vanguard during any invasion or annexation the Union might execute.

In large scale engagements, SOF groups are often placed in command of regular units in the People's Army. Also, they are not afraid to use androids in combat, despite any bans. They maintain several strike units of Davydovich Syem combat synthetics throughout the Frontier.

MINISTRY OF SPACE SECURITY (MSS)

INTERNAL AFFAIRS, INTELLIGENCE, COUNTERINTELLIGENCE, UNCONVENTIONAL WARFARE

Everyone in the UPP is afraid of the MSS—your own mother could be a security sleeper agent and not even know it herself. The MSS has spies situated throughout the UA and ICSC, smuggling out weapons plans and vehicle designs. They send liaisons to disgruntled 3WE and UA colony worlds to convince them to defect to the Union. They perform unorthodox psychological and biological experiments for the good of The People, but often at some of the people's expense. When the MSS appears on the scene, command of any operation is turned over to the ranking MSS Officer on site, regardless of the SOF or People's Army commander's rank—an arrangement that SOF command doesn't enjoy, but simply must comply with. ■

MAKING MARINES

"How many drops is this for you, Lieutenant?"
"Thirty eight... simulated."
"How many combat drops?"
"Uh, two. Including this one."

—LT. ELLEN RIPLEY, LIEUTENANT SCOTT GORMAN, AND PRIVATE JENETTE VASQUEZ

Either via draft, free will, or at gunpoint, you signed up for the Colonial Marines. Congratulations. Your recruiter probably gave you a pretty story about a paid education, learning a trade, traveling to beautiful new worlds, and getting off your boring ass colony. Probably even told you that the Americas haven't been in an open conflict since the Dog War ended, almost twenty years ago. Definitely told you you'd get to shoot a nice big gun. Well marine, that last part is 100 percent true. The rest, well—lets just say those little gems ain't as shiny as you thought.

If you've signed up thinking you're going to be taking on enemy platoons by yourself and slow motion running away from explosions like some goddamn action hero nonsense—just stop that shit right now. You're embarrassing yourself and you are embarrassing the Corps. Modern warfare is a dangerous business. Once you step off that dropship and onto a battlefield, you'll run into more ways to die than there are for you to stay alive. Just remember that war is more Nuts and Gory than Guts and Glory.

ON THE READY LINE

In a Colonial Marines campaign, most if not all PCs will typically be of the Colonial Marine career as described in the core rulebook (page 38). This chapter gives you more background detail and more options for Colonial Marines, to create a more varied group of PCs.

It's possible to create Pilot and Officer PCs (pages 50 and 48 of the core rulebook, respectively) within the USCMC as well, but it can be challenging to play as pilots tend to stay on their ships and commissioned officers only command units of platoon size and up. A team of Pilots could work if the PCs belong to an EVAC fighter wing, but most missions would be aerospace combat based. Smaller units such as squads and sections are commanded by non-commissioned officers (NCOs) who count as Colonial Marines in game terms but can learn some Officer talents as well. More on that below.

The players should ideally create their squad of Marines together, in a group. The normal rules for character creation apply, unless stated otherwise here. ■

CREATING YOUR MARINE

How you create your Marine is explained in detail in this chapter. The summary below is a helpful overview. Grab a character sheet, a pencil, and follow these steps:

1. **Decide together who in the group should be unit commander.**
2. **Choose your Military Occupational Specialty (MOS).**
3. **Distribute 14 points amongst your attributes.**
4. **Distribute 10 points amongst your skills**
5. **Choose your MOS talent.**
6. **Roll for your field events.**
7. **Choose your rank.**
8. **Choose your name.**
9. **Decide on your appearance.**
10. **Decide on your Personal Agenda.**
11. **Choose your Buddy and Rival.**
12. **Get your gear and a signature item.**

RECRUITMENT 101. In the Corps, the galaxy is your playground, and you get to see it all. Every assignment is a new planet, every mission is a new moon. You have trouble making friends? In the Corps, you will have no choice but to form life and death bonds with your squad—instant life buddies. Out of cash and worried about paying for that sleeping cage you rent? In the Corps, all that shit's taken care of, baby. You've got room and board and all expenses covered—all courtesy of Colonial Administration. You earn money to send back home. Plus, you get to show the universe you are a goddamn patriot.

Still not convinced—I get it. What if I told you you'll not only get all that, but also get to shoot one of these puppies—the M41A1 Pulse Rifle. Every rifleman gets one of their very own—go on, hold it. Feel the weight. She fires 10 millimeter explosive-tip caseless light armor piercing rounds and comes with her own over-and-under thirty millimeter pump action grenade launcher. You can really fuck up someone's day with one of these. Sounds good, now, doesn't it. ■

THE BASICS

You need to work together with the other players to create your characters. Have a look at the command breakdown on page 40 and decide on a unit size that fits the number of players—a typical group will be a squad, but a larger group might be a full section, while a smaller group could be just a single fireteam.

MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY (MOS)

When the commander has been assigned, it's time for everyone to choose their Military Occupational Specialty—MOS for short. Your MOS determines your exact job in the corps. You'll find a number of MOS to choose from on page 54 and forward.

Talk to each other when selecting MOS. Look at the requirements of the standard four-man squad. It contains two fireteams, typically a Gun Team (a smartgunner and a comtech Marine) and a Rifle Team (two Marines who can select their MOS freely). One of those four will be designated squad leader. It is possible, also, that the section's commander (a sergeant) might attach themselves to the squad, making five Marines in total. Squads can also be formed by swapping out one fireteam for an Assault, CBRN, or Recon Team. See Chapter 3.

Finally, it is also possible to create a Colonial Marine campaign that is focused on the two-man crew of a dropship, or the driver and gunner of an M577 APC or XT-37 FAV. The crew chief and AFV Marine specialties are provided for this.

THE COMMANDER: As the unit commander, you still need to choose a MOS. You won't actually have this specific role any longer, but it determines your skill set based on what you did before you took command.

ATTRIBUTES

Allocate 14 points to the standard attributes of Strength, Agility, Wits and Empathy as normal. Your MOS will indicate your key attribute, to which you can assign up to 5 points. For the other attributes, 4 is the maximum.

TALENTS

Choose one of the talents listed for your MOS. Some of these talents are new. If you're an NCO, you can choose an Officer career talent instead of a MOS talent. ■

SKILLS

Allocate 10 points to your skills. You must allocate at least one skill point each to **CLOSE COMBAT**, **STAMINA**, **RANGED COMBAT**, **MOBILITY**, and the skills listed by your MOS. MOS skills can start at up to level 4. For non-MOS skills, 3 is the maximum starting level.

JOINING THE MARINES

Most new recruits have an initial age of 18–23. Recruits are initially trained as Marine infantry riflemen at Camp Pendleton, California, where the best will eventually graduate having mastered their Military Occupational Specialty (MOS). In their first few months, a Marine holds the rank of private. Within a year or so, they will have been promoted to private first class (PFC). Some will go on to become lance corporals.

MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY (MOS)

Your Military Occupational Specialty—MOS for short—determines what you do in the corps. In game terms, your MOS is a skill package that provides several skill choices. This MOS might be a rifleman, combat medic or smart gunner, for example. The specialties of AFV Marine and Dropship Crew Chief may only be suitable for vehicle-based games, however. You can find a selection of MOS below.

AFV MARINE

When the squad gets itself in the shit, you are the one who has to come bail them out. You are part of the crew of a Marine armored fighting vehicle (AFV) such as an APC or tank. Whether driver or gunner, you share responsibility for your vehicle's maintenance and repair.

- **KEY ATTRIBUTE:** Agility
- **SKILLS:** Piloting, Ranged Combat
- **TALENTS:** All-Terrain Driver, Banter, Heavy Weapons, Overkill, Past the Limit

ASSAULT MARINE (BREACHER)

You are a combat specialist—trained for both major assaults and urban pacification. For crowd control, you carry stun batons, riot shields, and use rubber U1 ammo to subdue targets. You also use a big fucking rocket launcher to knock on doors. You are often paired with a comtech marine for the ultimate in badassery.

- **KEY ATTRIBUTE:** Strength
- **SKILLS:** Ranged Combat, Close Combat
- **TALENTS:** Banter, Subdue, Overkill, Past the Limit, Weapon Specialist (M5 RPG)

AUTOMATIC RIFLEMAN (SMARTGUNNER)

Smartgunners are a breed apart. The M56A2 smart gun's servo mount may keep it steady, but it takes muscle to withstand the kick-back and stay on target. You are tough and dedicated to your role as an asskicker in battlefield fire support—your buddies flush out the bad guys and you blow them away.

- **KEY ATTRIBUTE:** Strength
- **SKILLS:** Ranged Combat, Stamina
- **TALENTS:** Banter, Machinegunner, Overkill, Past The Limit, Weapon Specialist (M56A2 Smart Gun)

COMTECH MARINE

It's a modern battlefield—that means remote driven dropships, robot sentry guns, computer controlled bombs, and worse. You are a Comtech Marine—the squad's tech spec—skilled with computer systems, radios, diagnostic and hacking devices. Comtechs are essential to any squad and play a significant role in Assault Marine and CBRN Specialist fireteams.

- **KEY ATTRIBUTE:** Wits
- **SKILLS:** Comtech, Observation
- **TALENTS:** Bypass, Banter, Overkill, Past The Limit, Remote

CBRN SPECIALIST

You are trained to assess, contain, and quarantine chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear threats. Part field scientist, part rifleman—you're all Marine. Whether it's a dirty bomb, viral outbreak, or some chemical that melts people's faces off, you're the one with the tools who's cool enough to hold their breath and handle it.

- **KEY ATTRIBUTE:** Wits
- **SKILLS:** Observation, Heavy Machinery
- **TALENTS:** Banter, Inquisitive, Nerves of Steel, Overkill, Weapon Specialist (M230 Incinerator)

DEDICATED MARKSMAN

You are a sniper. You wear a camouflage ghillie suit, blend into the background, and pick off enemy soldiers at long range with your M42A scope rifle. Most platoons employ one or two dedicated marksmen and their spotters.

- **KEY ATTRIBUTE:** Agility
- **SKILLS:** Ranged Combat, Observation
- **TALENTS:** Banter, Killer, Overkill, Past the Limit, Weapon Specialist (M42A Scope Rifle)

DROPSHIP CREW CHIEF

You are the back-seat crewman of a drop-ship or gunship. On the ground you carry out maintenance, run pre-flight checks and handle loading and unloading. In-flight, you provide sensor and navigational data to the pilot and operate the weapon systems. The pilot might make the ship fly, but you make it go boom.

- **KEY ATTRIBUTE:** Strength
- **SKILLS:** Comtech, Heavy Machinery
- **TALENTS:** Banter, Fast Reflexes, Heavy Weapons, Overkill, Past the Limit

HOSPITAL CORPSMAN

You are still a rifleman—but you are one of the platoon's combat medics, able to provide life-saving first aid and even emergency battlefield surgery if needed. Your squad tends to have your back because they know they'll need you to patch them up when the shit starts flying.

- **KEY ATTRIBUTE:** Empathy
- **SKILLS:** Medical Aid, Observation
- **TALENTS:** Banter, Bodyguard, Hug the Dirt, Overkill, Past the Limit

FORWARD OBSERVER

The first one on the field—you scout ahead to silently take out enemies and secure a vantage point to set up shots for either artillery or a dedicated marksman. An advanced rifleman, you use silenced motion detectors, full spectrum scopes, ghillie suits, and suppressed Pups to coordinate targets for either your sniper or an airstrike.

- **KEY ATTRIBUTE:** Wits
- **SKILLS:** Observation, Mobility
- **TALENTS:** Banter, Watchful, Stealthy, Remote, Hug the Dirt

RIFLEMAN

As a rifleman, you're always on the frontline—walking point and looking out for ambushes and traps. The uneducated say you're just a grunt, but you are much more than that. Part scout and part assault trooper, you are the core of the Colonial Marines' close combat forces.

- **KEY ATTRIBUTE:** Agility
- **SKILLS:** Survival, Mobility
- **TALENTS:** Banter, Overkill, Past the Limit, Stealthy, Watchful ■

FIELD EVENTS

Marines have formative experiences that will impact their lives or career. Make a note of these events, they become an important part of your Marine's backstory. Most events bring with them some benefit, an advantage, skill gain, injury, or other effect.

For a normal enlisted Marine, just roll once on table A. For an NCO, also roll for a second field event on table B. For pilots and crew chiefs, instead roll on table C.

Re-roll if you roll the same event as another player. Skills and attributes can never go above 5 as a result of a field event. If you roll an event that would cause that to happen, re-roll. ■

EVENT TABLE A – ENLISTED

D66	EVENT
11–13	You picked up a maintenance jack during a colony siege. It got your squad into the heart of the complex where the fight was won. You kept hold of this useful tool, which works so well it give an additional bonus +1 to HEAVY MACHINERY when using it.
14–16	During a colony virus outbreak everyone ran out of ammo and your squad retreated to the Marshal's office where you fought off the infected colonists. You still have the 12-gauge shotgun you used that day.
21–24	You buck authority, given the choice of prison or the Corps, you chose the latter. You do your job but still don't like being told what to do. Gain the Hothead talent.
25–31	You threw yourself in front of a colonist and saved them from an insurgent attack. Your M3 armor saved you and you saved the colonist. You gained a Marine Commendation Medal and the Bodyguard talent.
32–34	A headshot knocked you down, the bullet embedding into your helmet. You picked it out and still wear it today—the bullet that should've killed you. Gain the bullet as a signature item.
35–41	Local alien wildlife ate the lieutenant and friendly fire took out the sergeant. You were the eldest of the young Marines and they turned to you for their orders. You didn't let them down. Gain +1 COMMAND skill.
42–44	The MAU trained for Operation Crossbow, a secret attempt to seize a UPP space station. Gain the Zero-G Training talent. The op never took place or, if it did, your platoon did not participate in it.
45–52	Your training days at Camp Pendleton were hell. A vindictive drill sergeant singled you out for merciless punishments. Gain the Tough talent.
53–55	You risked your life to save your comrades and were awarded the Galactic Cross, the second highest award that the UAAC can bestow. Officers in the battalion give you special treatment which causes tension in your platoon.
56–62	Manning a checkpoint on a war-torn colony world, you spotted suspicious behavior and shot the suicide bomber dead, saving a dozen lives in the process. Gain +1 OBSERVATION skill.
63–66	You've got a good rapport with the company logistics sergeant and he's always supplying you with unexpected or unconventional bits of equipment. Gain the Hidden Stash talent.

EVENT TABLE B – NCO

D66	EVENT
11–13	Age didn't play a part—everyone came to you during the hard times of the campaign. You were a brother, a father and confidante. Gain +1 EMPATHY.
14–16	The sun's going down, the squad's low on ammo and dead-beat, but you always volunteer to stand a double watch. The guys appreciate it. Gain the Light Sleeper talent.
21–24	You spent time training with Force Recon and gained a special ops M4A3 pistol with custom sound suppressor.
25–31	In combat you were severely injured and held on to life throughout the night behind enemy lines. Gain +1 STAMINA skill.

EVENT TABLE B – NCO

D66	EVENT
32–34	In a protracted bug hunt the ammo ran dry. Only determination, bravery and skill with a combat knife and entrenching tool saved your skin. Gain +1 CLOSE COMBAT skill.
35–41	It looked like the hostage rescue had failed but you bargained with the insurgents and secured their release after all. No medal for you, but you gain +1 MANIPULATION.
42–44	Your squad was relentlessly hit by booby traps and sniper fire from an invisible and unreachable enemy. Frustration and anger boiled over. Gain the Merciless talent.
45–52	The guy was screaming and bleeding. The squad panicked, but you took decisive action which saved the Marine's life. Gain +1 MEDICAL AID skill.
53–55	Your position was compromised, and the squad had to escape across rugged and dangerous terrain whilst under withering fire. Gain +1 MOBILITY skill.
56–62	Isolated behind enemy lines in a harsh environment, it looked like the end of the line for the squad. Your ingenuity in securing shelter and food kept your comrades alive during the march back to base. Gain +1 SURVIVAL skill.
63–66	The abandoned and damaged vehicle was the only way to escape an imminent attack, but you diagnosed the main problems and got the squad to fix it—fast. Gain +1 HEAVY MACHINERY skill.

EVENT TABLE C – PILOTS AND CREW CHIEFS

D66	EVENT
11–13	You earned a Distinguished Flying Cross during a period of intense "dust-off" medevac missions. That relentless flying schedule means that today you are addicted to neversleep pills.
14–16	The dropship was in a spin, just below the speed of sound, and despite the 9G acceleration, you remained conscious and fought to regain control. Gain +1 STAMINA skill.
21–24	They call you "super six," you always know when there is someone on your tail, it even works on the ground! Gain the Watchful talent.
25–31	While ferrying medical and food supplies to a disaster hit colony, you became the hero of the people. You carry a rosary given to you by one of the colonists.
32–34	Your air-support callsign is famous amongst the grunts on the ground. Once, the platoon sent you an inscribed bottle-opener. Gain a signature item.
35–41	After your dropship was shot down, you spent a week behind enemy lines desperately avoiding enemy patrols. Gain the Stealthy talent.
42–44	The dropship was once overrun by bugs, you fought bravely with an emergency fire axe to help clear them out and lift off. Gain +1 CLOSE COMBAT skill.
45–52	Constant field repairs on dirt landing fields with no resources forced you to improvise. Gain +1 HEAVY MACHINERY skill.
53–55	Your dad sent you a .357 Magnum to replace your 9mm M4A3 pistol. He wants you to get back home in one piece. Gain the pistol as a signature item.
56–62	Strapped to an ejection seat, you were shot through the thigh at 10,000 feet and six hours from base—you improvised a tourniquet and saved your own life. Gain +1 MEDICAL AID skill.
63–66	You and your crewman had to eject and survive for days in a hostile desert. Gain +1 SURVIVAL skill.

NEW TALENTS

These five talents are new and available only to Colonial Marines.

ALL-TERRAIN DRIVER Almost anyone can drive a tractor or APC, but with this talent you have experience driving all-terrain vehicles over rough terrain whilst minimizing damage to the vehicle. You get a +2 modification to **PILOTING** when driving a wheeled or tracked vehicle built for off-road travel.

BYPASS You have experience jury-rigging tool-kits and using diagnostic devices to hack doors. You gain a +2 modification to the **COMTECH** skill when attempting to unlock a locked entryway.

HEAVY WEAPONS The military uses a variety of heavy weapons, from plasma guns to tactical missiles and tank guns. You get a +2 modification to **RANGED COMBAT** when firing such weapons, and +2 to **HEAVY MACHINERY** when attempting to unjam or fix a heavy weapon.

HUG THE DIRT With this talent you're able to maximize cover from incoming ranged attacks when you're down on the ground, forcing an attacker using a ranged weapon at **MEDIUM** range or more to take a –2 modification. Going prone does not require an action, but you can only do it on your own turn. Getting up is a fast action. This talent can be combined with the effects of cover.

REMOTE You are qualified to set up, control and repair remote sentry guns and other remotely-controlled battlefield devices, and to pilot remote vehicles and Pups. Receive +2 to **COMTECH** rolls to carry out these tasks. The correct equipment is needed in all cases. A portable uplink terminal, for example, is needed to remote pilot a dropship, EVAC fighter or APC. ■

FINAL PREPARATIONS

Your Marine is almost ready for that first combat briefing, but there are some final preparations to complete.

RANK

In the ALIEN RPG, rank is a title with little authority. As explained in "Forget The Chain of Command" (page 119), the player characters decide their own fate. Rank is often associated with a Marine's role or position within the platoon.

When creating your character, simply choose a rank that fits your MOS and position from the table to the right. Most enlisted Marines will be Privates or PFCs, and your unit commander (NCO) will typically be a Corporal or a Sergeant. Higher ranks are rare for PCs.

PERSONAL STUFF

Your Marine needs a name, of course, as well as a description of their appearance, a Personal Agenda, a signature item and both a Buddy and a Rival. This is done as described in Chapter 2 of the core rulebook.

STARTING GEAR

A fresh Colonial Marine character gets three types of gear: basic gear, specialty gear, and bonus gear. All items listed below are included in the Gear chapter of this book or in the core rulebook.

Some PCs may find they acquire more gear than they can carry. That's not a problem—before each mission, choose what you're going to take, and leave the rest cluttering up your bunk back at base. ■

ENLISTED RANK	TYPICAL POSITION
Private	Team member
Private First Class	Team member
Lance Corporal	Team leader
Corporal	Squad leader
Sergeant	Section commander
Staff Sergeant	Platoon second-in-command
Gunnery Sergeant	Company second-in-command
Master Sergeant	Operations chief (unit varies)
First Sergeant	Operations chief (unit varies)
Master Gunnery Sergeant	Operations chief (unit varies)
Sergeant Major	Battalion or squadron second-in-command

OFFICER RANK	TYPICAL POSITION
Second Lieutenant	Platoon commander, Pilot
First Lieutenant	Platoon commander, Pilot
Captain	Company commander, Pilot
Major	Staff officer
Lieutenant Colonel	Battalion or squadron commander
Colonel	MAU commander
Brigadier General	Commander of brigade or divisions
Major General	Commander of brigade or divisions
Lieutenant General	High staff officer
General	Senior general-grade officer

BASIC GEAR

All Colonial Marines (including officers fighting in the field), will begin the game with the following gear:

- **Military ID Key Tags**
- **Battledress Utilities**
- **M3B Standard Boots**
- **IMP Individual Marine Pack (includes Personal Medkit)**
- **M10 Ballistic Helmet**
- **M3 Personal Armor With Built-In Personal Data Transmitter**
- **TNR Shoulder Lamp**

BONUS GEAR

Finally, each PC chooses one item from each list (A and B), below:

LIST A

- **Six Signal Flares**
- **Combat Knife**
- **Personal Data Transmitter/ Locator Accessory Set**
- **Bi-Mex Anti-Flash Sunglasses**
- **Polymer Climbing Rope**
- **Folding Winch**
- **Folding Entrenching Spade**
- **Electronic Tools**
- **Three Handcuffs**
- **Maintenance Jack**
- **Ultra Diffusive Environmental Poncho**
- **Samani E-series Watch**

LIST B

- **M4A3 Pistol**
- **VP-70MA6 Pistol**
- **Two G2 Electroshock Hand Grenades**
- **Spacesub ASSO-400 Harpoon Grappling Gun**
- **M240 Incinerator Unit**
- **Four Spare M40 Grenades**
- **Mechanical Cutting Torch**

SPECIALTY GEAR

A Marine's MOS may provide additional items of equipment:

- **AFV MARINE: M41A Pulse Rifle, Electronic Tools**
- **ASSAULT MARINE: M41A Pulse Rifle, U1 Baton Rounds, Stun Baton, M5 RPG, Riot Shield**
- **AUTOMATIC RIFLEMAN: M56 Smart Gun, Head-Mounted Sight**
- **COMTECH MARINE: M41A Pulse Rifle, Electronic Tools, Seegson System Diagnostic Device (SSDD)**
- **CBRN SPECIALIST: M41A Pulse Rifle, U4 Firebombs, CBRN Kit, UDEP Poncho, HAZMAT Suit**
- **DEDICATED MARKSMAN: Suppressed M42A Scope Rifle, Ghillie Suit**
- **DROPSHIP CREW CHIEF: G-Suit, Life Vest, Survival Kit, M4A3 Pistol, Mk.50 Compression Suit**
- **HOSPITAL CORPSMAN: M41A Pulse Rifle, Surgical Kit, Naproleve x5, Neversleep Pills x10**
- **FORWARD OBSERVER: M41A Pulse Rifle, F3S Spotter Scope, Suppressed Pups, Ghillie Suit**
- **RIFLEMAN: M41A Pulse Rifle, M314 Motion Tracker**
- **SERGEANT/STAFF NCO: M41A Pulse Rifle, Binoculars**
- **OFFICER: M41A Pulse Rifle, Binoculars, Seegson P-DAT**
- **PILOT: G-Suit, Life Vest, Survival Kit, M4A3 Pistol, Mk.50 Compression Suit**

"You are the sons and daughters of great pioneers—the colonial farmers and miners who expanded the reach of this great American Arm. And like your mothers and fathers, you now have the chance to do your part for the colonies. You will march into alien sunsets in the name of these United Americas. It's a march towards that which we have striven for nearly a century—life and liberty amongst the stars. Earth salutes you. The eyes of the colonies are upon you. Their hopes and prayers make planetfall with you. In the company of our brothers-in-arms in the interstellar navies, armies, and aerospace forces, it is you that protects these great territories from invasive species. Your strength and resolve will bring about the elimination of socialist tyranny over the oppressed peoples beyond the Red Line. You are the defenders of the stars themselves, and only you can guarantee security for ourselves on a free Frontier. You are the United States Colonial Marines—and it is an honor to serve with you."

—GENERAL DELYLA VAUGHN TO THE USCMC GRADUATING CLASS OF '80

GEAR

"Marine—you are only as good as your wits and your weapon. Sometimes that weapon is your own foot, sometimes it's your pulse rifle and sometimes it's a goddamn nuke. Whichever it may be, be sure to clean it regularly and stick it way up the enemy's ass."

—SGT. PHIL WLODARCZYK, 5TH COLONIAL MARINE SPECIAL OPERATIONS REGIMENT'S "SIN EATERS" CHARLIE TEAM

You are going into the shit—and what you carry in better be something that can help get you out. You don't want to bring a knife to a gunfight, now, do you? You don't step into the rain without your rubbers on and you don't go to church with your fly open. So step-up, zip-up, and see what's what, Marine—peruse these pages and get to know your own battlefield options—as well as what the enemy's likely to bring along to fuck your day up. Assuming they aren't sporting metal teeth and a spiked tail, of course.

If they are, screw it—just throw a grenade and run.

WEAPONS

PISTOLS

BIONATIONAL TX-9 CHEMICAL AND BIOLOGICAL INJECTION AIR PISTOL: This short-range pistol fires darts that can be loaded with a variety of pharmaceuticals or toxins, including bioweapons in serum form (see page 109 in the core rulebook). The pistol can also be used to deliver biochemical tracers. The tracer lasts for D6 days and can be detected with a CBRN kit from up to 30km away. Any AutoDoc can flush the trace elements out of your system, so find one and flush fast—who knows what's tracking you out there. Armor is doubled against this weapon, and it can never cause more than one point of damage—which it also needs to do in order to deliver its payload.

VP-70MA6 SEMI-AUTOMATIC PISTOL: This pistol is a time-honored weapon dating back nearly two hundred years. For nearly seventy years the VP70 series was only found in the hands of USCMC officers from key influential military families. Over the past decade, it has begun to supplant the outdated M4A3 as the standard Marine sidearm.

WEYLAND ES-4 SEMI-AUTOMATIC ELECTROSTATIC PISTOL: Developed a century ago, this electrostatic kinetic energy projectile weapon uses charged elements to fire high-speed armor piercing rounds. Each bullet carries a charge that has a stunning effect. Any human target that suffers damage from an attack must make a hard **STAMINA** roll (–2, doesn't count as an action) or be stunned for one Round, unable to act.

The ES-4 has a tell-tale blue muzzle-flash when fired. While a quality weapon, the pistol fell out of use before the Weyland-Yutani merger due to its cost and upkeep requirements—if not cleaned properly each day (takes one Turn), a shot fired will sometimes—if two or more Stress Dice turn up —stun the shooter as well.

While it can mostly be found in use amongst high level corporate security teams from the ICSC, a select number of colonial marshal offices are testing out a newer model as their standard side-arm on the Frontier—along with a pair of insulator gloves.

NORCOMM QSZ-203 SEMI-AUTOMATIC PISTOL: A short recoil operated weapon, this Chinese manufactured pistol has been the standard sidearm of the UPP since they absorbed the CANC in 2164. Rarely available for sale on the black market, the QSZ-203 fires 5.8mm rounds that have excellent armor piercing capabilities. Also the producers of the AK-4047 Pulse Rifle, Norcomm is the UPP firearms production division of the People's Army. Like the 4047, the 203 can be thrown off a three-story roof and still function just fine. Norcomm builds them to last. ■

PISTOLS

WEAPON	BONUS	DAMAGE	RANGE	WEIGHT	COST	COMMENT
Bionational TX-9 Chemical and Biological Injection Air Pistol	+1	1	Medium	1/2	$300	Delivers toxins or bioweapons, armor doubled (page 66).
VP-70MA6 Semi-Automatic Pistol	+2	1	Medium	1/2	$250	
Weyland ES-4 Semi-Automatic Electrostatic Pistol	+1	1	Medium	1/2	$1,000	Stun effect, armor piercing (page 66).
Norcomm QSZ-203 Semi-Automatic Pistol	+1	1	Medium	1/2	$400	Armor piercing.

VP-70MA6

BONUS: +2 | WEIGHT: 1/2

DAMAGE: 1 | COST: $250

RANGE: Medium

Weyland ES-4

BONUS: +1 | WEIGHT: 1/2

DAMAGE: 1 | COST: $1,000

RANGE: Medium | COMMENT: Stun effect, armor piercing (page 66).

RIFLES

ARMAT P9 S.H.A.R.P. RIFLE: The prototype Sonic Harpoon Artillery Remote Projectile is currently undergoing field trials by the USCMC. The P9 fires an array of dart types, including the 9X-E which releases a sticky explosive charge upon contact.

No roll is required to shoot a dart into a combat zone of the shooter's choice. The charge will explode after one Round, triggering a Blast Power 9 explosion. If anyone or anything in the zone, except a fellow Marine (identified via their PDT), moves before the time runs out, the charge explodes immediately.

If the dart hits an enemy target directly (requiring a normal attack roll), it detonates within a fraction of a second. A target directly hit by the dart suffers two additional points of damage, and their Armor Rating is halved (rounding up).

NORCOMM AK-4047 PULSE ASSAULT RIFLE: The UPP equivalent to the M41A Pulse Rifle, the AK-4047 is a cheap and reliable substitute. As such, the weapon often winds up in the hands of mercenaries and insurgents. While not as accurate as the M41, the AK-4047 is sturdier than the USCMC weapon. An AK-4047 still works after being thrown off a cliff and left underwater for a month.

NORCOMM AK-104S PULSE ACTION SUIT GUN: This UPP weapon is a pulse grade AK-104 rifle reconfigured and built into an armored exoskeleton forearm and shoulder housing. Worn standard with the CCC5 Combat Compression Suit, this semi-automatic weapon is mounted on the user's wrist to allow for flexibility in the field. An internal ammo belt feeds the gun from a stored ammo pack right next to the suit's O2 tanks. The ammo pack is the suit gun's weakness. Take it out (–2 to hit) and you'll not only ignite the ammo but feed the explosion with the suit's stored oxygen, triggering a Blast Power 9 explosion and destroying both the gun and the suit.

RMC F903WE AUTOMATIC ASSAULT RIFLE: Another reliable gun that has been around for a century, the RMC F903WE was issued to Weyland-Yutani's first major colonization efforts at the start of the century. Today it is often found in the hands of colonial militias or mercenaries. It was most recently made famous as the weapon of choice for the Australian rebels. The F903WE is not a pulse weapon, but don't let that fool you. While its armor piercing abilities are limited, it can still fuck up your perfect composure.

WEYLAND-YUTANI NSG23 ASSAULT RIFLE: A successor to the old Weyland Storm Rifle of a century ago, the NSG23 or "New Storm Rifle" has a high capacity ammo drum and an underbarrel ID23 incinerator unit attachment. The primary assault rifle of the 3WE Royal Space Marines, the NSG23 is also sometimes used by W-Y troops. While the USCMC tested the weapon in the late 2170s, the corps decided to stay with the armor piercing M41Pulse Rifle—prompting W-Y to sell the design to the 3WE.

WEYLAND-YUTANI ID23 UNDERBARREL INCINERATOR UNIT: While it has a shorter range and reduced fuel supply compared to the M240, the ID23 flamethrower easily connects to the undercarriage of an assault rifle, making it convenient in the field. Any target hit by an incinerator unit also catches fire, Intensity 7.

RIFLES

WEAPON	BONUS	DAMAGE	RANGE	WEIGHT	COST	COMMENT
Armat P9 S.H.A.R.P. Rifle	-	Blast Power 9	Long	2	$15,000	Detonates after one Round, or when an enemy within the zone moves.
Norcomm AK-4047 Pulse Assault Rifle	-	2	Long	1	$500	Full auto.
Norcomm AK-104s Pulse Action Suit Gun	-	2	Long	-	-	Armor piercing, full auto, included in the CCC5 Combat Compression Suit.
RMC F903WE Automatic Assault Rifle	-	2	Long	2	$500	Full auto.
Weyland-Yutani NSG23 Automatic Assault Rifle	+2	2	Long	1	$1,500	Full auto, I23 Incinerator Unit included.
ID23 Underbarrel Incinerator Unit	-	2	Medium	-	$700	Fire Intensity 7, included in the N23 Assault Rifle.

"We got tactical smart missiles, phased plasma pulse rifles, RPGs. We got sonic, electronic ball-breakers! We got nukes, we got knives, sharp sticks..."

—PRIVATE FIRST CLASS WILLIAM HUDSON

Norcomm AK-4047

BONUS: -

DAMAGE: 2

RANGE: Long

WEIGHT: 1

COST: $500

COMMENT: Full auto.

RMC F90-3WE

BONUS: -

DAMAGE: 2

RANGE: Long

WEIGHT: 2

COST: $500

COMMENT: Full auto.

Weyland-Yutani NSG23

BONUS: +2

DAMAGE: 2

RANGE: Long

WEIGHT: 1

COST: $1,500

COMMENT: Full auto, I23 Incinerator Unit included.

Norcomm AK-104s

BONUS: -

DAMAGE: 2

RANGE: Long

WEIGHT: -

COST: -

COMMENT: Armor piercing, full auto, included in the CCC5 Combat Compression Suit.

HEAVY WEAPONS

ARMAT U4A2 REPEATING GRENADE LAUNCHER: Designed for CBRN sterilization teams, this rapid-fire dedicated grenade launcher is most often equipped with the U4 QTC Firebomb ammunition but it can also fire other varieties.

M5A3 RPG ROCKET PROPELLED GRENADE LAUNCHER: This shoulder-fired rocket launcher is equipped with a telescopic targeting sight.

NORCOMM RPG122 ROCKET PROPELLED GRENADE LAUNCHER: The 122 is a bare-bones rocket launcher without a sophisticated sight, that requires a reload after each shot. Armor piercing.

WEYLAND 72A LEW LIGHT ENERGY WEAPON: This portable directed energy cannon consists of a sighted shoulder-mounted weapon and a 15mW power pack. The LEW fires vaporized pellets of cadmium telluride. The LEW packs a serious punch at close range and slices through armor very well, but the damage done is reduced by one step for each range band beyond **SHORT**. It has several other disadvantages, including being cumbersome and having to recharge for two Rounds after each shot, effectively meaning it can only be fired every other Round.

M78 PIG PHASED-PLASMA INFANTRY GUN: The USCMC favors rocket launchers over light energy weapons, but do have their own model, the M78 PIG Phased-Plasma Infantry Gun.

UA-102-20 INDEPENDENTLY TARGETING PARTICLE BEAM PHALANX: The UA-102-20 is a close-in weapon system (CIWS) composed of twenty independently targeting particle beams working in close formation. Similar to starship-to starship combat laser arrays, the particle beam phalanx is a vehicle combat scale offensive/defensive solution to multiple incoming aggressors. The UA102-20's computer module can instantly calculate the probability of the phalanx taking a target out, as well as what fire rate and pattern is needed.

Like a shipboard laser array, the Particle Beam Phalanx can also be focused to fire on a single target with devastating results—base damage is increased by 3 (to 7) and range to Extreme, but without the full auto option. The twenty independent particle beams are limited by their power source—on its own battery power or that of a vehicle, the PBP must recharge for two Rounds between firing cycles and cannot safely draw the power needed for a concentrated blast.

If the user attempts to do this anyway, the UA-102-20 starts to emit a high-pitched whine. Roll a Stress Die. On a , the weapon explodes, triggering a Blast Power 12 explosion. If not, it fires as planned (**STRESS LEVEL** + for the user). Tapped into a city's power grid, the 102-20 is nigh unstoppable.

You can't buy one of these. They are illegal for civilians to own in all territories. As the firing signature of each 102-20 is unique and traceable, even the black market doesn't want to deal in them. Either your unit is assigned one or you steal it.

HEAVY WEAPONS

WEAPON	BONUS	DAMAGE	RANGE	WEIGHT	COST	COMMENT
Armat U4A2 Repeating Grenade Launcher	+2	Varies	Long	2	$1,100	Can fire different grenade types.
M5A3 RPG Launcher	+1	5	Extreme	2	$1,800	Single shot, armor piercing.
Norcomm RPG122	–	5	Extreme	2	$1,700	Single shot, armor piercing.
Weyland 72A Light Energy Weapon	+1	6	Extreme	3	$10,500	Armor piercing, damage reduced by 1 for each range band beyond SHORT.
M78 PIG Phased-Plasma Infantry Gun	+1	6	Extreme	3	$9,000	Armor piercing, damage reduced by 1 for each range band beyond SHORT.
UA-102-20 Independently Targeting Particle Beam Phalanx	+2	4/7	Long/ Extreme	–	$25,000	Armor piercing, full auto or focused attack with increased damage and range (page 71).

M5A3 RPG Launcher

BONUS: +1

DAMAGE: 5

RANGE: Extreme

WEIGHT: 2

COST: $1,800

COMMENT: Single shot, armor piercing.

EXPLOSIVES AND AMMUNITION

ARMAT M40 HEDP GRENADES: Designed for the U1 and U4 grenade launchers, the High Explosive Dual Purpose M40 can also be used as a hand grenade. To use these U1 rounds as a thrown explosive, the red plastic cap must be removed and the trigger under it depressed. Three seconds later, the grenade will explode. The UPP has an equivalent made by Norcomm.

M72A1 STARSHELL FLARES: For the U1 and U4 grenade launchers. Fired straight up into the air, this intensely bright flare will illuminate one combat zone for D6 Rounds. If fired directly at a human target, any crit inflicted will be #15 on the table on page 100 of the core rulebook.

M230 BATON ROUNDS: For the U1 and U4 grenade launchers. These non-lethal rubber projectiles are for use in urban crowd control. Baton rounds can incapacitate without killing. Armor is doubled and any critical injuries from these rounds will be #16, #24, or #33 (equal chance of each).

M108 BUCKSHOT CANISTERS: For the U1 and U4 grenade launchers. These oversized shotgun shells can deliver a wallop at close range. They are favored by Colonial Marshals on remote backwater colonies.

U4 QTC FIREBOMB AMMUNITION: For the U1 and U4 grenade launchers. Designed for decontamination protocols, this quinitricetyline filled cartridge incinerates everything in the target zone with Intensity 12 fire.

ARMAT TYPE 4 ASSAULT BREACHING CHARGE: A focused, adhesive charge designed to breach a door or wall, the Type 4 can be detonated by timer or remote. The UPP has an equivalent made by Norcomm. The breaching charge has Blast Power 9. Against the immediate target, the damage is increased two steps and counts as armor piercing.

ARMAT M20 CLAYMORE MINE: This proximity (**SHORT** range) triggered anti-personnel mine has a laser tripwire that requires an **OBSERVATION** roll to notice, even when actively looking. These are readily available on the black market.

ARMAT M111 ANTI-VEHICLE MINE: These mines are pressure sensitive and can be triggered by personnel as well as vehicles. When something of a predetermined weight enters the mine's proximity (**ENGAGED** range), the mine is activated. The mine has Blast Power 12. Against the immediate target, the damage is increased two steps and counts as armor piercing.

"Check it out. Independently targeting particle-beam phalanx. WHAP! Fry half a city with this puppy."

—PRIVATE FIRST CLASS WILLIAM HUDSON

EXPLOSIVES AND AMMUNITION

WEAPON	DAMAGE	WEIGHT	COST	COMMENT
M40 HEDP Grenade	Blast 9	1/4	$60	For U1/U4. MEDIUM range when used as a hand grenade.
M72A1 Starshell Flares	2	1/4	$50	For U1/U4. Illuminates one zone. Any critical injury inflicted will be #15.
M230 Baton Rounds	3	1/4	$30	For U1/U4. Armor doubled. Any critical injury inflicted will be #16, #24, or #33.
M108 Buckshot Canisters	3	1/4	$30	For U1/U4. Armor doubled, SHORT range.
U4 QTC Firebomb Ammunition	Fire 12	1/4	$600	
Armat Type 4 Assault Breaching Charge	Blast 9	1	$200	Against the immediate target, damage is increased by 2 and is armor piercing.
M20 Claymore Mine	Blast 9	1/2	$150	Triggered at SHORT Range, OBSERVATION required to spot.
M111 Anti-Vehicle Mine	Blast 12	2	$1,000	Triggered at Engaged Rang. Against the immediate target, damage is increased by 2 and is armor piercing.

CHEMICAL WEAPONS

Chemical weapons have been banned on Earth by the Geneva Convention for over 250 years. However, legal precedent was set in the 2050s that clarified that those rules only applied to Earth. As such, chem-weapons are fair game on the extrasolar colonies.

CN-20 NERVE AGENT: This deadly nerve gas has lasting results on an enemy and anyone else unlucky enough to be within its range. When there are no other options, it's time to roll out a canister or two. A single canister will affect everything within one zone. Roll a Stress Die at the start of each Round—on a ✦, the gas dissipates.

In a contaminated zone, all humans without a hazmat suit must make a **STAMINA** roll with a –3 modifier each Round (before performing any actions). Failure means suffering one point of damage and **STRESS LEVEL** +1 now, and again in each following Round, even if the victim leaves the contaminated zone. If the victim is Broken while suffering the effects of a nerve agent, they must make a Death Roll every Round. The only way to save the victim's life at this point is a hard (–2) **MEDICAL AID** roll.

A NOTE FROM MU/TH/UR: This is mean stuff. Your lieutenant will only authorize the use of CN-20 as a weapon of last resort—unless he's a total dick. Nerve gas fucks with your neurotransmitters, telling them to coil up your muscles and not let go. Also, to shake a lot. You'll start with a snotty nose and some heavy breathing, but by the time it's all over you'll convulse, piss, and vomit yourself into a coma or asphyxia. Keep it up and you'll have chronic neurological damage to boot. Do yourself a favor and don't do anything that will make someone want to use this on you. ■

QUINITRICETYLINE EXPLOSIVE ACCELERANT (QTC): Often called QTC for short, quinitricetyline is a volatile toxic chemical usually found in liquid form. Similar to twentieth century napalm, QTC is often mixed with a gelling agent and used to firebomb an area containing enemy forces, dangerous indigenous life forms, or infectious disease. In 2163, a single drum of QTC was dropped into a beachhead bunker during the Tientsin Campaign. The blast not only incinerated the bunker itself but put a nearby tug in drydock for four months with significant damage. ■

A NOTE FROM MU/TH/UR: This shit's incendiary potential is bad enough in liquid form—when gelled it sticks to everything and burns like a supernova. Only total immersion in water will put out the flame even temporarily—within one Turn of emerging from the water, the QTC will self-ignite. Only self-consumption, careful removal of the gel, or completely cutting off its oxygen supply will quench this flame. ■

EXPLOSIVES AND AMMUNITION

WEAPON	DAMAGE	WEIGHT	COST	COMMENT
CN-20 Nerve Agent Canister	Special	1	$1,000	See page 74 for effects.
QTC Quinitricetyline Explosive Accelerant	Fire 15	1	$200 /liter	Comes in 200-liter drums. See above for effects.

SUITS AND ARMOR

UNIFORMS

ACRYLIC "DOG TAGS" MILITARY ID KEY: Identifier tags issued to all branches of the UAAC (and therefore USCMC), these laser engraved clear memory-plastic tags can be encoded to allow a specific wearer access to a ship or installation's command areas, armories, lockers, or more. They are read by swiping them through a sensor reader located at every USCMC door lock. Key tags are usually coded as per rank, so a private won't be able to get into the officer's mess on his own.

BATTLEDRESS UTILITIES (BDUS): These field uniforms come in colors and patterns appropriate for the mission's operating theater. Camouflage themes include Woodland, Rain Forest, Desert Sand, Martian Plain, Arctic Glacier, Lava Flow, Deep Sea, Pitch Space, and more.

GHILLIE SUIT: A camouflage suit that is customized to a specific environment, a Ghillie suit can allow a sniper to effortlessly blend into the terrain. The suit is equipped with a portable heatsink that masks the wearer's heat signature and protects them from infrared scanning. The suit gives a +2 bonus to **MOBILITY** rolls against being detected when in the proper environment.

M3B STANDARD BOOTS, M7 JUNGLE BOOTS, M8A2 THERMAL BOOTS, AND M11 PERFORMANCE ENHANCED PLATYPUS FINS: A Marine's got to wear the right footwear for the right job. While M3Bs will do on the flight deck and in your everyday barracks, you'll want a pair of M7s for a prolonged stay in a hot and moist environment (the alternative could be foot rot). Best strap up your M8A2s in cold weather scenarios, unless you like frostbite and aren't too fond of keeping your toes (**STAMINA** +1 to resist cold). The M11s are the best if you're going for a dip—they add +2 to underwater **MOBILITY** rolls.

UNIFORMS

FATIGUES	WEIGHT	COST	COMMENT
"Dog Tags" Military ID Key	–	$50	Contains owner's medical and personal data
BDUs	–	$55	
Ghillie Suit	1	$1,000	Grants a +2 bonus to MOBILITY rolls against being detected when in the proper environment.
MB3 Standard Boots	–	$40	
M7 Jungle Boots	–	$60	
M8A2 Thermal Boots	–	$75	STAMINA +1 to resist cold.
Platypus Fins	1/2	$100	Grants a +2 bonus to MOBILITY rolls when underwater.

PROTECTIVE GEAR

LIFE VEST: An inflatable flotation vest included in many vehicular survival kits, a life vest will keep its occupant buoyant in most liquids. It includes a built-in flashlight and solar powered beacon transmitter that will broadcast PDT information over a two-kilometer radius.

COLD WEATHER PARKA: Sometimes it's damn cold on whatever frigid ball you've been dropped on. Other times, your lieutenant is too cheap to warm up your frigate's life support past bare minimums. In either case, wearing one of these heated hoodies gives a +2 bonus to **STAMINA** rolls made to resist the effects of severe cold (page 107 of the core rulebook).

MILITARY GRADE HAZMAT SUIT: This impermeable bodysuit acts as protection against hazardous materials. The suit protects fully against chemical and biological contaminants as long as no damage has pierced it. It also acts as armor against radiation. Each time you suffer a Radiation Point, roll six Base Dice—if you roll one or more , the Rad is absorbed by the suit. HAZMAT suits have a built-in comm unit and a limited air supply. They do not protect against the vacuum of space.

UDEP ULTRA DIFFUSIVE ENVIRONMENTAL PONCHO: These camouflaged rain-coverings are worn to protect from the elements, chemical spills, and more. Treated with an infrared absorbing coating, these ponchos can also make a Marine nearly invisible in the rain (**STEALTH** +2 in wet environments). Often worn by CBRN specialists in the field, the poncho offers a +2 **STAMINA** bonus to resist chemical and biological contaminants as long as no damage has pierced it.

G-SUIT: This light pilot's jumpsuit is standard issue to starfighter pilots. Pressure plates within the legs regulate blood flow. The helmet normally connects to the craft's life support, but has a small compressed oxygen bottle that offers an Air Supply of 1 for limited independent use.

PROTECTIVE GEAR

FATIGUES	WEIGHT	COST	COMMENT
Life Vest	1	$65	Prevents drowning, when at the water surface.
Cold Weather Parka	1/4	$100	STAMINA +2 to resist cold.
Military Grade HAZMAT Suit	2	$1,000	Armor Rating 1, Air Supply 2. Built-in comm unit. Protects against chemical and biological contaminants and radiation (page 76).
UDEP Ultra Diffusive Environmental Poncho	1	$500	STAMINA +2 against chemical and biological contaminants, STEALTH +2 in wet environments.
G-Suit	1	$120	Air Supply 1.

BODY ARMOR

M10 BALLISTIC HELMET: Worn as part of the M3 Personnel Armor (page 127 of the core rulebook), the helmet is equipped with a full motion tactical camera system that transmits to the squad's APC, dropship, or ground tactical monitoring station. The helmet mounts a passive infrared sight and an Identify Friend/Foe (IFF) transmitter that will prevent automated systems like sentry guns from killing you.

KEVLAR RIOT VEST: A relatively lightweight vest made of woven metal fibers, the kevlar riot vest is the personal armor of choice for law enforcement and security details throughout the colonies. It offers limited protection from bullets, knives, shrapnel and any kind of penetrating weapon.

ARMAT CM4 PLASTISTEEL RIOT SHIELD: This lightweight plastisteel shield is often used in urban warfare by Assault Marines as well as by Colonial Marshals. With a slow action, the shield will provide cover (page 96 of the core rulebook) with Armor Rating 5, which is added to any body armor. If the user moves, the cover from the shield is lost.

6B90 COMBAT ARMOR: Bulky and heavier than its Colonial Marine equivalent, the 6B90 is the standard personal armor of UPP troops and protects the neck, shoulders, torso, and crotch of the wearer. The 6B90 is equipped with a full motion tactical camera system that transmits video and vitals to local command.

CCC5 COMBAT COMPRESSION SUIT: An armored compression suit similar to the Mk.50 Compression Suit (page 128 in the core rulebook), the CCC5 is less cumbersome than its USCMC equivalent but the helmet viewport is comparatively small and gives –1 to **OBSERVATION** rolls. Each CCC5 comes standard with an AK-104 attached. ■

BODY ARMOR

SUIT	ARMOR RATING	AIR SUPPLY	WEIGHT	COST	COMMENT
M10 Ballistic Helmet	–	–	0	–	Built-in tactical camera. Included in the M3 Personnel Armor.
Kevlar Riot Vest	4	–	1	$600	Built-in comm unit.
Armat CM4 Plastisteel Riot Shield	5	–	1	$300	Gives cover after a slow action.
6B90 Combat Armor	6	–	2	$1,000	Built-in comm unit and tactical camera.
CCC5 Combat Compression Suit	2	5	2	$15,500	OBSERVATION –1, AK-104 attached.

OTHER EQUIPMENT

BIMEX PERSONAL SHADES: Save the colonies and look cool doing it. Targeting lasers, atomic flash blasts, and solar radiation can cause instant blindness on the battlefield—but not while wearing a pair of BiMex sunglasses or goggles. The patented mirror refractory technology of BiMex lenses is even rumored to have reflected directed energy weapons back on their target. When wearing these, roll a Base Die if you're hit by a laser weapon, such as the Rexim RXF-M5 EVA Pistol. On a ⌖, the beam is deflected and inflicts no damage. The shades, alas, are ruined in the process. Protect your eyes when you protect your country.

CBRN DETECTION KIT: This Chemical Biological Radiological and Nuclear Detection Kit includes a Geiger counter, a biological and chemical agent diagnostic device, four doses of neurotoxin inhibitors, four emergency respirators (good for one Turn each before recharging), a pair of acid proof gloves and goggles, syringes, sampling tools, chemical detection paper, and four heat resistant specimen jars. Using this kit automatically detects the current Radiation Level (page 110 of the core rulebook) and any chemical or biological pathogen at the user's location. It also gives the user a +2 modification to Sickness Rolls (page 109 in the core rulebook).

IMP INDIVIDUAL MARINE PACK: This waterproof medium backpack comes standard equipped with a medkit and Supply rating 4 worth of food and water (see page 34 of the core rulebook). In addition, the IMP allows you to carry two more regular-sized items than normal without being over-encumbered.

TNR HIGH BEAM SHOULDER LAMP: A high-powered flashlight, the TNR can be carried by hand or mounted to the shoulder bracket on APE Suits, M3, Kevlar, or 6B90 armors, allowing for hands free use. The TNR removes the effect of darkness in a zone (page 83 of the core rulebook).

MUZZLE SUPPRESSOR: If you gotta shoot someone in public, pop one of these cylinders on the end of your firearm and do it real quiet like. Just remember that anyone calling it a silencer is full of shit—nothing is going to completely silence a bullet. What it does do is force your enemies to make an **OBSERVATION** roll to detect the shot. Muzzle Suppressors are available for a variety of firearms, ranging from pistols to sniper rifles.

FOLDING ENTRENCHING SPADE: A ground pounder's best friend, this collapsible shovel can also be used as a close combat weapon. A smart Marine will heat up their spade with an incinerator unit, turning the shovel into a makeshift cooking pan for field grub. So, you can dig a critter out of its hole, kill it, and then fry it up—all with your damn trusty spade.

FOLDING WINCH: This tripod winch-and-cable device was developed so that prospectors could inspect newly dug mining shafts with their hands free—but it works just as well for rappel and rescue ops. No **MOBILITY** climbing roll is required of you while hooked in and ascending or descending a chasm on a folding winch's polymer climbing rope. Also, when whatever lives down there wraps itself around your face, your buddies can winch your ass back up, blow quarantine procedures, and put everyone at risk—just for fun.

POLYMER CLIMBING ROPE: This high-polymer abrasion-resistant coated cable comes in 45-meter coils. Just remember—"abrasion resistant" only means it won't fray easily and you won't cut up your bare hands climbing it. Acid will still eat through it and you'll still get a nasty rope burn sliding down it. Ain't friction a bitch?

F3S FULL SPECTRUM SPOTTER SCOPE: Able to see in a variety of spectrums and sync with data provided by Pups, the Spotter Scope allows a Recon Rifleman to roll **OBSERVATION** to assist his Sniper's aim. Each success gives a +1 bonus to the shot, as long as neither Marine moves nor is attacked. Multiple rolls are not allowed.

PDT/L PERSONAL DATA TRANSMITTER BRACELET/LOCATOR TUBE SET: One piece is a PDT wrist-worn accessory, the other is its dedicated locator. Limited to a range of under 100 meters (four zones), the locator tube digitally displays its proximity to the bracelet and beeps louder as it approaches the transmitter. If the tube is synced to an APC TAC center, full biometric data of the wearer can be accessed.

M73PX PARAFOIL: This non-rigid delta-shaped airfoil collapses down small enough to fold up and tuck in a rucksack. They are usually used in stealth drops to silently glide into enemy territory. If for some reason you are in an exploding dropship or aerospace fighter and manage to eject without decapitating yourself, you'll want one of these to help you make a softer landing. Donning a parafoil is a slow action, deploying it is a fast action. The **PILOTING** skill is used to maneuver. In flight, the parafoil has a Speed rating of 3 (page 114 in the core rulebook). ■

OTHER EQUIPMENT

DEVICE	WEIGHT	COST	COMMENT
BiMex Personal Shades	0	$150	Can deflect lasers (page 78).
CBRN Detection Kit	1	$800	Detects radiation and gives a +2 bonus to Sickness Rolls.
Individual Marine Pack	0	$100	Increases carrying capacity by 2.
TNR High Beam Shoulder Lamp	1/2	$60	Removes the effect of darkness in a zone.
Muzzle Suppressor	1/4	$50–$200	Enemies must roll OBSERVATION to detect the shot.
Folding Entrenching Spade	1/2	$30	Can be used as a close combat weapon (bonus +1, base damage 2)
Folding Winch	1	$40	To be used with rope, removes the need for MOBILITY rolls when climbing.
Polymer Climbing Rope	1/2	$40	45-meter length line with abrasion resistant coating.
F3S Full Spectrum Spotter Scope	1/2	$200	Adds a bonus to coordinated sniper attacks (page 79).
PDT/L Bracelet/ Locator Tube Set	1/4	$100	See description (page 79).
M73PX Parafoil	3	$1,250	Speed 3, PILOTING used to maneuver.

VEHICLES

Sometimes beating the bad guy with a big stick just isn't enough—sometimes you want to run them over—twice. Sometimes, you even want to drop a starship on their ass. Or, maybe it isn't about the bad guy at all. Sometimes you just need to get somewhere faster than on foot.

Whatever you want to call it, this section is for you.

VEHICLE WEAPONS: All of the vehicle weapons included in the vehicle descriptions here are described in the table on page 96.

MOTORIZED INFANTRY

LOCKHEED MARTIN M577 ARMORED PERSONNEL CARRIER

The standard ground transport of the USCMC, the M577 APC carries a full Marine section into battle. Its interior is equipped with a tactical command center with links to each soldier's helmet cams and biosigns. The exterior is armored with a laser absorbing paint job.

In addition to a small front mounted turret, the M577 mounts a rotating main weapons package on a rail system that allows it to slide back and store in the rear of the vehicle when not in use, thus lowering the APC's profile and heat signature. The air pressure in its large, armored wheels is controlled by the driver in order to facilitate better traction over soft terrain and allow the vehicle's chassis some additional clearance over rough ground—its low profile is perhaps the APC's biggest weakness. Put a reckless driver behind the wheel in a rocky environment and you are likely to blow the transaxle.

The amphibious and vacuum tight APC is designed to be carried in the vehicle bay of a Cheyenne dropship, allowing it to be deployed nearly anywhere. While the M577 is the standard APC seen on the Rim, there are variants with different weapons configurations.

M577 APC

ENCOUNTERED: USCMC battlefields and military bases across the Frontier and Outer Rim

TOP SPEED: 150 km/h

LENGTH: 9.2m

STANDARD ARMAMENT:

- Phased Plasma
- Pulse Cannon Turret
- 20mm Gatling Gun Turret

M579 AIR DEFENSE APC

ENCOUNTERED: USCMC battlefields, Frontier and Outer Rim.

TOP SPEED: 150 km/h

LENGTH: 8.58m

STANDARD ARMAMENT:

- 20mm Gatling Gun Turret
- 4 x Hellcat Light Missiles

LOCKHEED MARTIN M579 AIR DEFENSE APC

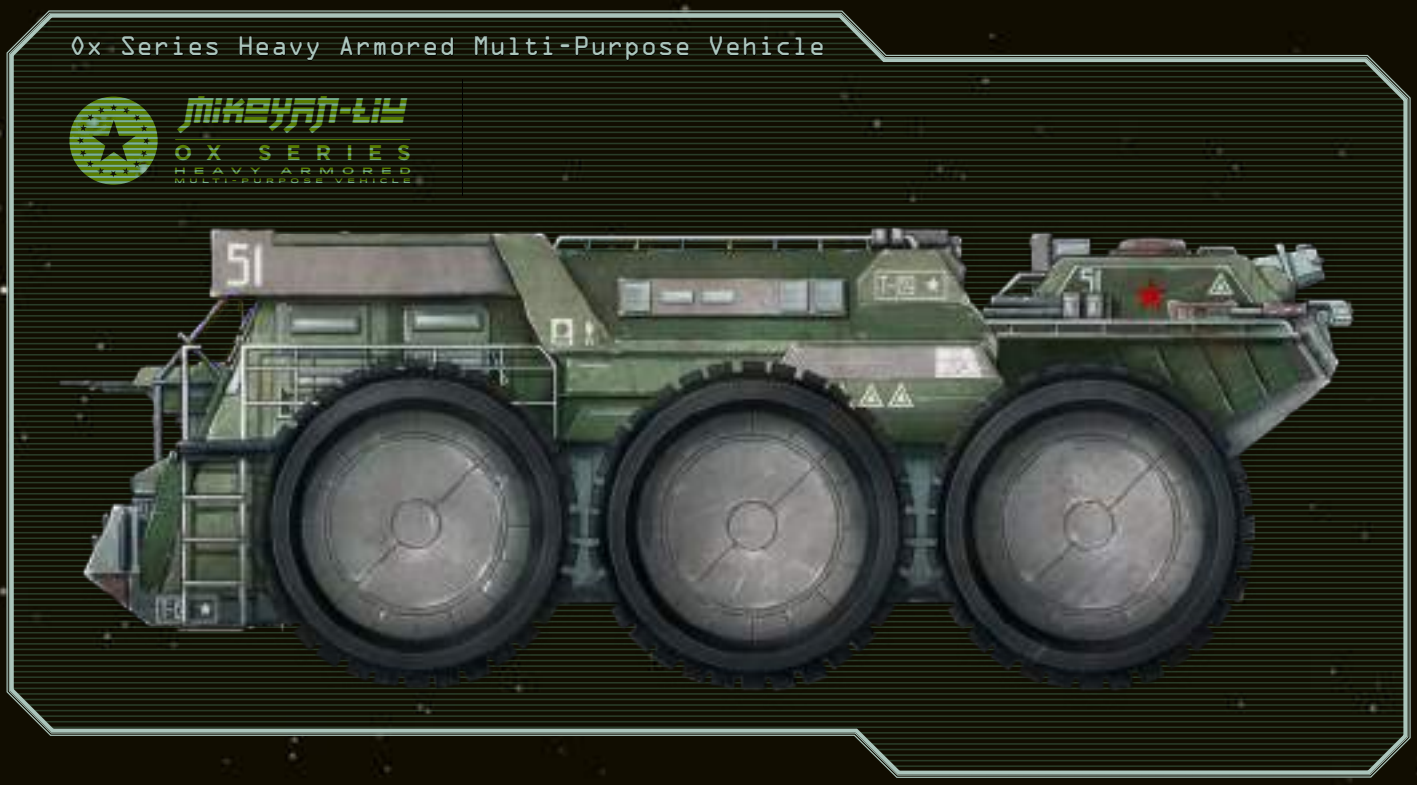
A variant of the iconic M577 APC, the M579 forgoes the pulse cannon turret and the front 20mm turret for a quad mount housing four 20mm rotary gatling guns and a vertical Hellcat missile launcher in the front designed to take out incoming enemy craft.

MIKOYAN-LIU OX SERIES HAMPV 6x6 HEAVY ARMORED MULTI PURPOSE VEHICLE

Designed around the fortified chassis of a heavy construction truck, the UPP Ox is a three-meter-tall behemoth on the battlefield. Its six massive wheels can climb over almost any terrain. The HAMPV's shielded pilot cab and crew compartment are a self-contained environment, and the vehicle can operate both fully submerged and in a vacuum. The Ox's weapons configuration is often mission specific.

The HAMPV is a staple of the UPP military and serves a variety of roles from troop transport to cargo truck, from mobile artillery to mobile command center. As surplus UPP equipment is cheap and easy to come by, stripped HAMPVs are also in use by civilians on many UA and 3WE Frontier colony worlds. The Ox has a small crew, and in troop transport configuration can carry up to two full SOF squads.

Ox Series Heavy Armored Multi-Purpose Vehicle



MIKOYAN-LIU OX SERIES 6X6 MULTI PURPOSE VEHICLE

ENCOUNTERED: UPP military, Frontier civilians.

TOP SPEED: 68 km/h

LENGTH: 16.1m

STANDARD ARMAMENT:

- **3 x 20mm Gatling Gun Turrets**
- **Phased Plasma Pulse Cannon Turret**
- **Multidirectional Flame Unit**

SEEGSON MX11A1 "HOVERTREAD" LIGHT INFANTRY VEHICLE

An experimental concept, the so-called Hovertread was Seegson's bold attempt to redefine what all terrain meant—and it is a perfect example of the design by committee nightmare. The MX11A1 runs over terrain on treads and can hover above it on gyrojets. It is really good at neither and barely adequate at either. While altitudes as high as 12 meters can be achieved, sustained hover at any height over 4 meters is risky. The mode change from hover platform back to treads is problematic and can lead to a slipped tread.

After being tried out with a select few squads on the Frontier (including the 2nd Battalion Bravo Team), the MX11A1 was rejected by the military and the project was shelved. Shortly thereafter, however, the MX11A1 began showing up on ICSC controlled worlds in the hands of corporate commandos. The circumstances surrounding the ICSC arriving at the same design are now under investigation—but we both know they stole that shit. While the prototype utilized two 15 round light lasers, the turret on the production model sports dual Smartguns.

MX11A1 LIGHT INFANTRY VEHICLE

ENCOUNTERED: RMC, ICSC, Seegson forces.

TOP SPEED: 82 km/h (ground), 50 km/h (air)

LENGTH: 5.1m

STANDARD ARMAMENT:

- XR-500 Long Range Particle Cannon
- M-56 Smartgun Turret
- 3MP Dual EMP blaster

ALPHATECH XT-37 STINGER 4x4 FAST ATTACK VEHICLE

A fast attack vehicle in use by the USCMC for less than a decade, the XT-37 Stinger is a lightly armored off road vehicle. Designed to carry a driver and a gunner, the XT-37 features a double-barrelled 50mm injection-cooled cannon as well as a deployable weapons package with four surface-to-surface missiles.

They can take a beating and keep on driving—while a dropship must land briefly to discharge an M577, the XT-37 can be pushed out if the Cheyenne does a low pass at low speeds. After the plummeting XT tumbles across the terrain, it can be righted by ground personnel and speed away (just don't climb in one before you pull off that little stunt—the XT-37 is invulnerable to great falls—you—not so much). A variant XT-37C (Civilian Type) is popular on homesteader worlds. The 37C forgoes the weaponry and adds a 3-meter-long targeted snare-arm for wrangling wildlife.

XT-37 STINGER FAST ATTACK VEHICLE

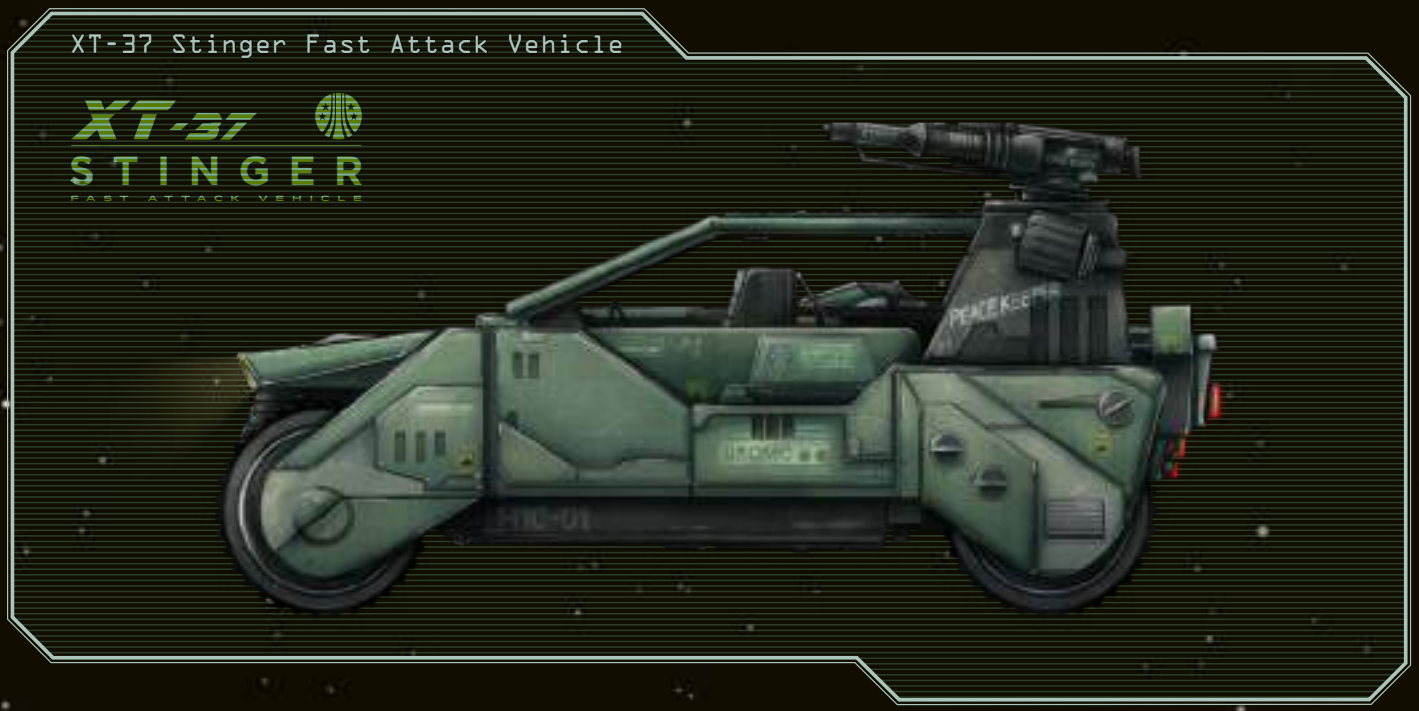
ENCOUNTERED: USCMC, CCAF, ICSC, civilian Frontier worlds.

TOP SPEED: 220 km/h

LENGTH: 4.1m

STANDARD ARMAMENT:

- 50mm Double-Barreled Cannon
- 4 x Hellcat Light Missiles



MOTORIZED INFANTRY

VEHICLE	PASSENGERS	MANEUVER-ABILITY	SPEED	HULL	ARMOR	COST
Lockheed Martin M577 APC	13	+1	3	8	8	$500,000
Lockheed Martin M579 Air Defense APC	9	+1	3	8	8	$600,000
XT-37 Stinger Fast Attack Vehicle	2	+2	4	4	4	$50,000
MX11A1 Light Infantry Vehicle	3	–1	2	6	8	$220,000
Ox Series Heavy Armored Multi-Purpose Vehicle	26	+0	2	10	8	$926,000

ARMOR

M22A3 JACKSON MEDIUM TANK

The M22 is a century old battle tank that is finally being phased out of the USCMC. Often called “dinosaurs” by the marine crews that have been unlucky enough to use them in combat, the Jackson has been replaced in most units by the new M40-E Ridgeway. Local militia and mercenaries still use them.

M-22A3 JACKSON MEDIUM TANK

ENCOUNTERED: USCM, CCAF, Frontier militia and rebel groups.

TOP SPEED: 60 km/h

LENGTH: 8.83m

STANDARD ARMAMENT:

- 85mm Rifled Cannon
- 20mm Gatling Gun

M40-E RIDGEWAY HEAVY TANK

The newest and most advanced USCMC mobile armor, the new M40-E is a radical chassis upgrade from the original Ridgeway tank. Designed to complement the classic M577 APC, the M40-E has cutting edge stealth, mobility and point defenses and can be run by a tank crew of two or three. The Ridgeway is amphibious and can be deployed in an aquatic environment, but its surface speed is reduced to 15 km/h.

M40-E RIDGEWAY HEAVY TANK

ENCOUNTERED: USCMC

TOP SPEED: 72 km/h (ground), 15 km/h (water)

LENGTH: 9.77m

STANDARD ARMAMENT:

- 115mm Rifled Cannon
- 60mm Mortar
- 20 kW Phased Plasma Point Defense Gun

M40-E Ridgeway Heavy Tank

ARMOR

VEHICLE	PASSENGERS	MANEUVER-ABILITY	SPEED	HULL	ARMOR	COST
M22A3 Jackson Medium Tank	5	-2	2	7	8	$3,700,000
M40-E Ridgeway Heavy Tank	3	+0	2	9	12	$8,920,000

ARTILLERY

M292A2 SELF PROPELLED ARTILLERY

Essentially a giant gun on treads, the M293 is the standard artillery of the USCMC. Using ramjet powered shells gives the M292's 41-calibre 158 mm cannon the ability to hit a target over 60 km away. A small laser defense turret protects the M292 from incoming fire.

M292A2 SELF PROPELLED ARTILLERY

ENCOUNTERED: USCMC and CCAF.

TOP SPEED: 60 km/h

LENGTH: 11.1m

STANDARD ARMAMENT:

- 41-Caliber 158mm Cannon
- Small Laser Defense Turret

BP-33 CELESTIAL DEFENSE ARTILLERY GUN

You want to see a really big fucking gun? This is it. The UPP doesn't do anything small. A massive 54-meter-long surface to orbit artillery piece, a BP-33 gun is set up by the UPP in groups of two to six to defend a newly taken colony. BP-33s are not mobile. Instead, they are positioned by heavy vehicles—usually HAMPVs or Krokodils—with support bolts fired into the bedrock beneath them to anchor them in place. Able to take out orbiting frigates, the Celestial Defense operates on the same principle as the USCMC remote sentry guns, only larger. They are automated and programmed to shoot down any craft that does not transmit a friendly code.

BP-33 CELESTIAL DEFENSE ARTILLERY GUN

ENCOUNTERED: UPP military and science outposts.

TOP SPEED: –

LENGTH: 54.1m

STANDARD ARMAMENT:

- Heavy Rail Gun
- 3 x Small Laser Defense Turrets
- Targeting A.I. (RANGED COMBAT 8)

M201 MULTIPLE LAUNCH ROCKET SYSTEM

The M201 is a heavy-tracked and turreted missile launcher with eight massive rocket tubes. In use by both the UA Colonial Marines and the 3WE Royal Marines, the M201 is designed to fire traditional 250mm Thunderbolt rockets, with variant models such as the Rainmaker and Stormbringer that scatter mines and firebombs, respectively. These rockets are aimed at entire zones, not individual targets. On a miss, a random adjacent zone is hit instead.

All eight rockets on the M201 can be fired with a single (slow) action. The launch crew can designate individual target zones for each rocket, but they must all be adjacent to each other. Roll one attack roll for the entire barrage—on a miss, determine deviation separately for each rocket. While capable of delivering a devastating barrage, the M201 is encumbered by its reload time—after all rockets are fired, it takes support personnel a full Turn to reload.

M201 MULTIPLE LAUNCH ROCKET SYSTEM

ENCOUNTERED: USCMC and RMC.

TOP SPEED: 60 km/h

LENGTH: 7.2m

STANDARD ARMAMENT:

- 8 x 250mm Thunderbolt, Rainmaker, or Stormbringer rockets

ARTILLERY

VEHICLE	PASSENGERS	MANEUVER-ABILITY	SPEED	HULL	ARMOR	COST
M292A2 Self-Propelled Artillery	6	–2	1	10	6	$9,400,000
M201 Multiple Launch Rocket System	8	–1	1	8	5	$11,700,000
BP-33 Celestial Defense Artillery Rail Gun	6	–	–	12	7	$26,100,000

ASSAULT CRAFT

UA NORTHRIDGE AD-19C/D BEARCAT VTOL STRIKESHIP

A subsidiary of Weyland-Yutani following the '67 Buy Out, UA Northridge designed the Bearcat strikeship to take the role of a light assault helicopter in combat. These VTOL attack craft often escort Cheyenne dropships over a battlefield. Strikeships are designed to scout an area and offer air-to-ground fire support to troops. They can be fitted with armored underslung MEDIVAC panniers that carry up to six wounded. While they can operate equally well in space or in an atmosphere, they do not have the engine power to reach escape velocity unassisted. They are usually deployed planetside only. The C model's cockpit accommodates a crew of two, but the D has a larger cabin that holds four.

UA NORTHRIDGE AD-19C/D BEARCAT VTOL STRIKESHIP

ENCOUNTERED: USCMC and CCAF, Frontier marshals and CCG.

TOP SPEED: 400 km/h

LENGTH: 8.8m

STANDARD ARMAMENT:

- 25mm Gatling Cannon
- 2 x Sightline Beam Turrets

AD-19 C/D Bearcat VTOL Strikeship

UA NORTHRIDGE CHEYENNE UD-4L VTOL DROPSHIP

The pinnacle of USCMC battlefield supremacy, the Cheyenne dropship has an unparalleled success rate performing double duty as both a transport and gunship. While a strikeship like the Bearcat is more maneuverable, it lacks the versatility of the Cheyenne.

A Cheyenne is dropped from orbit into the fray from the ventral bay of any USCMC frigate or carrier, swiftly descending through the atmosphere like a meteor. The current model has been specifically augmented to carry the M577 into a combat zone, deploy the APC and its marine squad, and immediately assume an air support role for the squad.

The ship is mostly a transport bay with cockpit, weapons systems, and engines attached—there is little in the way of other accommodations aboard. While in supersonic descent, the Cheyenne's weapons pods are retracted flush with its hull. These pods deploy for subsonic combat. With a proper satellite uplink, the Cheyenne is capable of being flown by remote from a portable terminal. Few pilots have the skill necessary for this maneuver, and the task is usually left to the squad's android XO.

UD-4L CHEYENNE VTOL DROPSHIP

ENCOUNTERED: USCMC battlefields and military bases across the Frontier and Outer Rim.

TOP SPEED: Mach 9

LENGTH: 25.2m

STANDARD ARMAMENT:

- 25mm Gatling Gun
- Mk.16 150mm Banshee 70 Unguided Rocket Launcher
- 7 x AGM-220C Hellhound II Tactical Missiles
- 3 x AIM-90E Headlock Air-to-Air Missiles

CHEYENNE UD-4 DROPSHIP VARIANTS

The Cheyenne Dropship has been the staple of the Colonial Marines for nearly two decades, largely due to its versatile adaptability. Below are some of the most often seen variants on the Frontier.

UD-4B PRODUCTION MODEL: Discontinued by the USCMC as of 2172, UD-4B is the original production model and is now only in use in the private sector. The 4B has no provisions for nose guns and no deployable weapon bays. Those in paramilitary use are equipped with the main missile array, but civilian models are stripped of all weapons. Additionally, the dropship has a smaller cargo capacity and as such has no provisions for an APC. The UD-4B can carry eight passengers.

UD-4S SKYCRANE: Based on the same space frame as the well-known UD-4, this model has a hook and cable system connected to the large empty space behind the cockpit area, allowing the 4S to lift and carry substantial cargo to and from orbit. The UD-4S can carry an M292 self-propelled artillery gun into battle, and several Skycranes working in tandem can be tasked with carrying vehicles as large as a Bison freighter.

UD-4C GUNSHIP: This model sacrifices the APC bay to carry extra weapon and missile modules—the cargo area having been refitted with deployable gunner stations and a single file personnel ramp instead of one for cargo. She operates with two additional crew and can carry eight additional passengers or troops.

UPP-DS3 ACCIPITER: As the UD-4B was making its way into the private sector in the late 2170s the UPP began deploying their own dropships that were coincidentally very similar in chassis design to the Cheyenne production model. Usually seen plate grey in color, the bulky Accipiter has no folding wings and is equipped only with two rocket pods and a gatling gun in the nose. Unlike the Cheyenne, the Accipiter is equipped with a tachyon shunt drive that allows it to make limited leaps of up to 1.2 parsecs away—making the Accipiter ideal for covert insertions on the front.

UD-4B PRODUCTION MODEL

ENCOUNTERED: Frontier civilian, corporate, CCG and Marshal use.

TOP SPEED: Mach 8

LENGTH: 24.8m

STANDARD ARMAMENT: None

UD-4S SKYCRANE

ENCOUNTERED: USCMC and Corporate.

TOP SPEED: Mach 8

LENGTH: 31.6m

STANDARD ARMAMENT:

- 25mm Gatling Gun
- 6 x Mk.16 150mm Banshee 70 Unguided Rocket Launcher
- 6 x AGM-220C Hellhound II Tactical Missiles

UD-4C GUNSHIP

ENCOUNTERED: USCMC and Corporate.

TOP SPEED: Mach 9

LENGTH: 25.8m

STANDARD ARMAMENT:

- 3 x 25mm Gatling Gun
- 2x Mk.16 150mm Banshee 70 Unguided Rocket Launcher
- 14 x AGM-220C Hellhound II Tactical Missiles
- 3 x AIM-90E Headlock Air-to-Air Missiles

DS3 ACCIPITER

ENCOUNTERED: UPP.

TOP SPEED: Mach 10

LENGTH: 25.2m

STANDARD ARMAMENT:

- 25mm Gatling Gun
- 8 x UPP Medium Air to Air Missile Launcher

MI-220 KROKODIL SERIES ARMORED ATTACK DROPSHIP

The UPP's answer to the Cheyenne dropship, the sluggish Krokodil is twice as large, armored, and armed as her UA counterpart and only a third slower than it. Her distinctive double bubble cockpit design lineage can be traced to the Russian Hind D attack helicopter of the late 20th century.

The Krok's fuselage is slung under a large wing with port and starboard docking cradles for carrying two HAMPV transports externally. Because of this, the Krokodil is a brick in freefall and vulnerable to ground artillery during atmospheric entry. Her missile pods are wing-mounted and her guns are in her chin turret. The lower cockpit is a pilot and gunner station while the upper one serves as an observation post and strategic operation center. In an emergency, control can be assumed via redundant pilot controls in the command post.

The Krokodil uses a dual tow hook and winch system to snag and retrieve HAMPV transports for an expedited extraction.

MI-220 KROKODIL ATTACK DROPSHIP

ENCOUNTERED: UPP military.

TOP SPEED: Mach 8

LENGTH: 33.2m

STANDARD ARMAMENT:

- 25mm Gatling gun
- 12 x UPP Amur Medium Air-To-Air Missiles
- UPP Anti-Personnel Missile Pod
- 12 x Wing Mounted UPP Karakurt Heavy Anti-tank Missiles

Mi-220 Krokodil Attack Dropship

ASSAULT CRAFT

VEHICLE	PASSENGERS	MANEUVER-ABILITY	SPEED	HULL	ARMOR	COST
AD-19 C/D Bearcat VTOL Strikeship	2 (C), 4 (D)	+3	3	6	5	$1,340,000
UD-4L Cheyenne VTOL Dropship	15	+2	4	10	7	$3,100,000
UD-4B Production Model	15	+1	3	9	4	$2,000,000
UD-4S Skycrane	3	+0	2	8	6	$3,200,000
UD-4C Gunship	12	+1	3	10	8	$3,500,000
DS3 Accipiter	15	+1	4	9	6	$2,900,000
Mi-220 Krokodil Attack Dropship	15	+1	3	12	7	$2,700,000

AEROSPACE FIGHTERS

MiG-730 SERIES AEROSPACE INTERCEPTOR

The MiG-730 is the most common UPP fighter-craft encountered on the Frontier. It is a cramped, snub-nosed single pilot craft with huge after-burners and a semi-pressurized cockpit (a full spacesuit is required to operate it in a vacuum).

Even less armored than the EVAC-3 (but faster), the MiG-730 is an ambush fighter. While the 730 can make planetfall, it is incapable of leaving a planetary atmosphere on its own power and must dock with a lifter to do it.

MIG-730 AEROSPACE INTERCEPTOR

ENCOUNTERED: UPP Military.

TOP SPEED: Mach 18

LENGTH: 18.5m

STANDARD ARMAMENT:

- 6 x Amur Medium Air-to-Air Missile Launchers
- 2 x 20mm Gatling Cannons

MiG-730 Aerospace Interceptor

ALPHATECH EVAC-3 SERIES AEROSPACE SUPERIORITY TRANS ATMOSPHERIC FIGHTER

The primary fightercraft of the United States Aerospace Force, the EVAC fighter is the most maneuverable military aerospace plane to roll off the Alphatech assembly lines. It is just as deadly within an atmosphere as it is in the void. EVAC squadrons are transported in docking racks that are attached to Colonial Navy or Marine frigates.

The EVAC has a modular storage compartment directly aft of the pilot seat, allowing the cockpit to be configured to a mission specific one- or two-seater. In single user configuration, an EVAC cockpit can act as stasis chambers for a pilot sent on long range missions. While swift and powerful, the EVAC is only lightly armored. ■

EVAC-3 AEROSPACE FIGHTER

ENCOUNTERED: USCMC and USASF.

TOP SPEED: Mach 15

LENGTH: 19.1m

STANDARD ARMAMENT:

- 4 x Wing Mounted AGM-660 Warhawk Tactical Missiles
- 2 x 25mm Gatling Cannons
- Phased Plasma Pulse Cannot Turret

EVAC-3 Aerospace Fighter

AEROSPACE FIGHTERS

VEHICLE	PASSENGERS	MANEUVER-ABILITY	SPEED	HULL	ARMOR	COST
EVAC-3 Aerospace Fighter	1 or 2	+3	5	7	5	$3,996,000
MiG-730 Aerospace Interceptor	1	+2	6	6	4	$2,630,000

VEHICLE WEAPONS

WEAPON	BONUS	DAMAGE	RANGE	COST	COMMENT
20mm Gatling Gun	+3	3	Long	$7,500	Armor piercing. Full auto.
25mm Gatling Gun	+3	3	Extreme	$9,000	Armor piercing. Full auto.
Phased Plasma Pulse Cannon Turret	+1	6	Extreme	$54,000	Armor piercing.
Multi-Directional Flame Unit	–	4	Medium	$4,200	Fire Intensity 9.
Mk.16 150mm Banshee 70 Unguided Rocket Launcher	–	3	Long	$48,000	Triggers Blast Power 12 explosion in addition to direct damage. Full auto.
AGM-220C Hellhound II Tactical Missile Launcher	+2	7	Extreme	$76,000	Can only target ground vehicles and buildings. Armor piercing. Missile cost: $12,000.
AIM-90E Headlock Air-to-Air Missile Launcher	+3	5	Extreme	$64,000	Can only target air vehicles. Armor piercing. Missile cost: $9,000.
Hellcat Light Missiles	+2	5	Long	$40,000	Armor piercing.
50mm Double-Barreled Cannon	+3	4	Long	$30,000	Armor piercing, full auto.
20 kW Phased Plasma Point Defense Gun	+2	5	Extreme	$55,000	Armor piercing.
XR-500 Long Range Particle Cannon	–	6	Extreme	$120,000	Armor piercing.
3MP Dual EMP Blaster	+1	2	Long	$12,000	Armor has no effect. Causes no component damage.
85mm Rifled Cannon	+1	6	Extreme	$100,000	Armor piercing.
115mm Rifled Cannon	+2	8	Extreme	$160,000	Armor piercing.
Sightline Beam Turrets	–	–	Extreme	$5,000	Pilot rolls OBSERVATION to assist attack from another vehicle against a target. Each success gives a +1 bonus to the shot.
Small Laser Defense Turret	–	–	–	$10,000	Can be fired once per Round as a reactive action against an incoming missile or rocket. On a success, the missile is destroyed.

VEHICLE WEAPONS

WEAPON	BONUS	DAMAGE	RANGE	COST	COMMENT
60mm Mortar	–	4	Long	$16,000	Triggers Blast Power 12 explosion in addition to direct damage.
41-Caliber 158mm Cannon	+2	10	Extreme	$250,000	Armor piercing.
250mm Thunderbolt Rocket	–	–	Extreme	$23,000 per rocket	Triggers Blast Power 15 explosion in the target zone. Does not inflict direct damage.
250mm Rainmaker APM Rocket	–	–	Extreme	$41,000 per rocket	Spreads D6 M20 Anti-Personnel Mines in the target zone and all adjacent zones.
250mm Stormbringer QTC Rocket	–	–	Extreme	$37,000 per rocket	Spreads Intensity 15 fire in the target zone and all adjacent zones.
AGM-660 Warhawk Tactical Missile	+3	10	Extreme	$24,000 per missile	Single shot “Fire and Forget” guided missile. Armor piercing.
UPP Anti-Personnel Missile Pod	–	2	Long	$35,000	Triggers Blast Power 9 explosion in addition to direct damage. Full auto.
UPP Karakurt Heavy Anti-Tank Missile Launcher	+1	6	Extreme	$60,000	Can only target ground vehicles and buildings. Armor piercing. Missile cost: $10,000.
UPP Amur Medium Air-to-Air Missile Launcher	+2	4	Extreme	$45,000	Can only target air vehicles. Armor piercing. Missile cost: $6,000.
UPP BP-33 Rail Gun	-1	15 (against vehicles), 5 (against starships)	Extreme	$22,000,000	Armor piercing. Can only target orbital craft or craft entering the atmosphere. Can only fire once every other Round.

SPACECRAFT

This section includes several new spacecraft, using the same format as in Chapter 7 of the core rulebook. Armaments, internal modules and upgrades are also described there.

STARSHIP REGISTRY PREFIX

Every starship has a military, commercial, or private registry. In addition to an actual registry number, a prefix is attached to the vessel's name for clarity's sake. While there are many others, here are a few of the most common ones you'll see on the Frontier.

United Americas Military	UAS	United American Spaceship
United States Military	USS	United States Spaceship
United States Commercial	USCSS	United States Commercial Star Ship
Private Civilian Ship	SS	Star Ship
Private Service Ship	STSV	Space Towing and Salvage Vessel
UPP Military	SSV	Security Space Vessel
UPP Civilian	PSV	People's Space Vessel
3WE Military	HMS	Her Majesty's Spaceship
3WE Decommissioned Military Commercial	HMCSS	Her Majesty's Commercial Star Ship
ICSC Commercial	CSCSS	Central Space Commercial Star Ship

A NOTE FROM MU/TH/UR. Private ships can have the USS, UA, HM, and 3WE as part of their SS or STSV prefix (Example: HMSSV). All UA commercial starships are registered in the US. Most UA military branches use the UAS designation for their warships—except for US military branches such as the USCMC and the USASF, which use the USS prefix instead. This is why there is the USS Sulaco as well as the UAS Archangel. Private starships (SS) are registered in the ICSC, regardless of where they come from. All ICSC military ships are classified as commercial (war is a business), so they have no separate prefix. ■

RF-30F CLASS B SERVICE SKIFF

The RF-30F is a short-range craft intended to perform inspection, repair, and service work on larger vessels. The cramped skiffs are similar to a submersible in design and can only carry a crew of up to four (if they are real friendly) for a journey of no more than two days (although there is no head, so if you gotta pee, you gotta do it in a bottle). The service skiff is equipped with high intensity lights and small deployable manipulator arms for performing light repairs and accessing interface ports.

With its passive sensors, low energy signature, and overpowered thrusters, the multi-purpose service skiff is often used as a reconnaissance vessel to enter a disputed area ahead of an Assault Frigate. Each Conestoga Frigate carries a mandatory two vehicles. Skiffs are not FTL capable. They can make planetfall but are incapable of reaching orbit on their own power.

RF-30F CLASS B SERVICE SKIFF

MANUFACTURER: LUNNAR-WELSUN
COST: $800,000
CREW: 1–4
AI: None
LENGTH: 10m
SIGNATURE: –3
THRUSTERS: +3
HULL: 2
ARMOR RATING: 2

ARMAMENTS:
- Sensor Decoys

INTERNAL MODULES:
- Manipulator Arms (+2 to HEAVY MACHINERY for external ship repairs)

UPGRADES:
- Stealth Technology
- Overpowered Thrusters

MODEL V-10A1113 MANTIS

G-CLASS MULTI-MISSION TRANSPORT

Envisioned as a cross between a long-distance troop transport and a dropship, the UAAC made good use of the Mantis class as a resupply ship during the Arcturan Conflicts and the Tientsin Campaign. The ship was primarily used for running blockades and getting supplies to colonial marines behind enemy territory. What wasn't advertised about her was that she was also working as a strike force transport, running special operatives in and out of the fray.

Her multi-vector independently articulated engine pods make her extremely maneuverable, allowing the Mantis to perform difficult combat drops and extractions under the most adverse climates and conditions. The Mantis was designed with multiple hardpoints on her hull for mounting equipment and cargo both internally and externally. These hardpoints proved useful for the mounting of mission specific sensor and ordinance packages. The Mantis makes an ideal craft for a small special forces team that needs to be able to get in and out of a system fast.

WEYLAND-YUTANI DDR-E3 DEAD DROP RE-ENTRY INSERTION VEHICLE

These ballistic capsules are fired at a planet from an orbiting vessel like a Conestoga-class frigate, each one containing a single-seated Marine with a folded parafoil. At the appropriate altitude, the marine ejects from the capsule and uses the parafoil to glide to a landing. The capsule itself does not slow, eventually striking the surface with extreme kinetic force. Standard Dead Drop complement on a Conestoga is 24 DDR-E3s—enough for two platoons—and they can be fired two at a time. The capsules cost $66,000 each.

USCMC BOUGAINVILLE CLASS ATTACK TRANSPORT

Introduced at the start of the 2180s, the Bougainville is a compact design intended to replace the older Conestoga frigates. The Bougainville resembles a smaller Conestoga with a distinct hammerhead bridge splayed across her bow. She does not have the same blind spots as a Cony, a fact that has led to the death of many a pirate.

FAMOUS FLYERS

The Flying Nun is a black and white V10A Mantis used by the 5th Division's Sin-Eaters. She most recently saw action during the Australian Wars—it was the Flying Nun herself that delivered the nuclear payload that ended the war. One of the first Mantis Transports—the Crop Duster—carried the assault team that ended Operation Arcturan Freedom in 2160.

VP-153D KREMLIN CLASS HUNTER-DESTROYER

After the fleet engagements at Arcturus, Tiensen, and the Red Line, the UPP decided it was time to rethink their approach to warships. In a post Chinese Arm era, the UPP needed something that could dominate the space lanes and overpower the USCMC's pet Conestoga.

The Kremlin fits the bill. The Kremlin has been called, "a large, smart, maneuverable, and heavily-armed warship designed to hunt and destroy other warships." Its 1VAN/3 computer is comparable to an A.P.O.L.L.O. system. Seegson says it's too comparable and insists the UPP stole their design (treat 1VAN/3 as an A.P.O.L.L.O. mainframe on page 130 of the core rulebook—but with a Russian accent). It carries four independently operated enhanced sensor suites and specialized "frigate buster" EMP missiles designed to cripple a Conestoga's reactor.

While similar in length to the Conestoga, the Kremlin is radically different in design. Equipped with a spherical Rohrmann FTL drive at its rear, a bulbous cargo/weapons array amidship, and led by a forward command dart bristling with dorsal and ventral antennae, the Kremlin has been described as a "Christmas ornament impaled on a prickly drill bit." Amongst the Marine Aerospace Wings, the profile of these destroyers has earned them the unceremonious nickname of "fatboy."

In the event of a catastrophic drive or weapons array failure, the command or "komanda drotik" section can disengage as its own subluminal craft equipped with an aft-facing protective shield dish. In this manner, the Kremlin can also be equipped with mission specific cargo/weapons arrays. Because of this, the ship can sometimes be found in the role of a colony ship or military cargo carrier.

In its typical military configuration, the Kremlin carries a flight of six MiGs, four HAMPV troop transports, and two Krokodils. With its German FTL drive, Vietnamese weapons packages, and Russian 1VAN/3 computer, the Kremlin is a symbol of the great union of socialist nations that make up the UPP. ■

"FRIGATE BUSTER" EMP MISSILES

This is a unique ship armament not included in the core rulebook. It requires a size III hardpoint, has a +1 bonus, base damage 5, and EXTREME range. As a special effect, if an EMP missile causes major component damage, it will automatically cripple the engine (result #7 on the table on page 199 of the core rulebook), in addition to a randomly rolled effect. The EMP missile launcher costs $50,000,000 and each missile costs $600,000.

G-CLASS MULTI-MISSION TRANSPORT

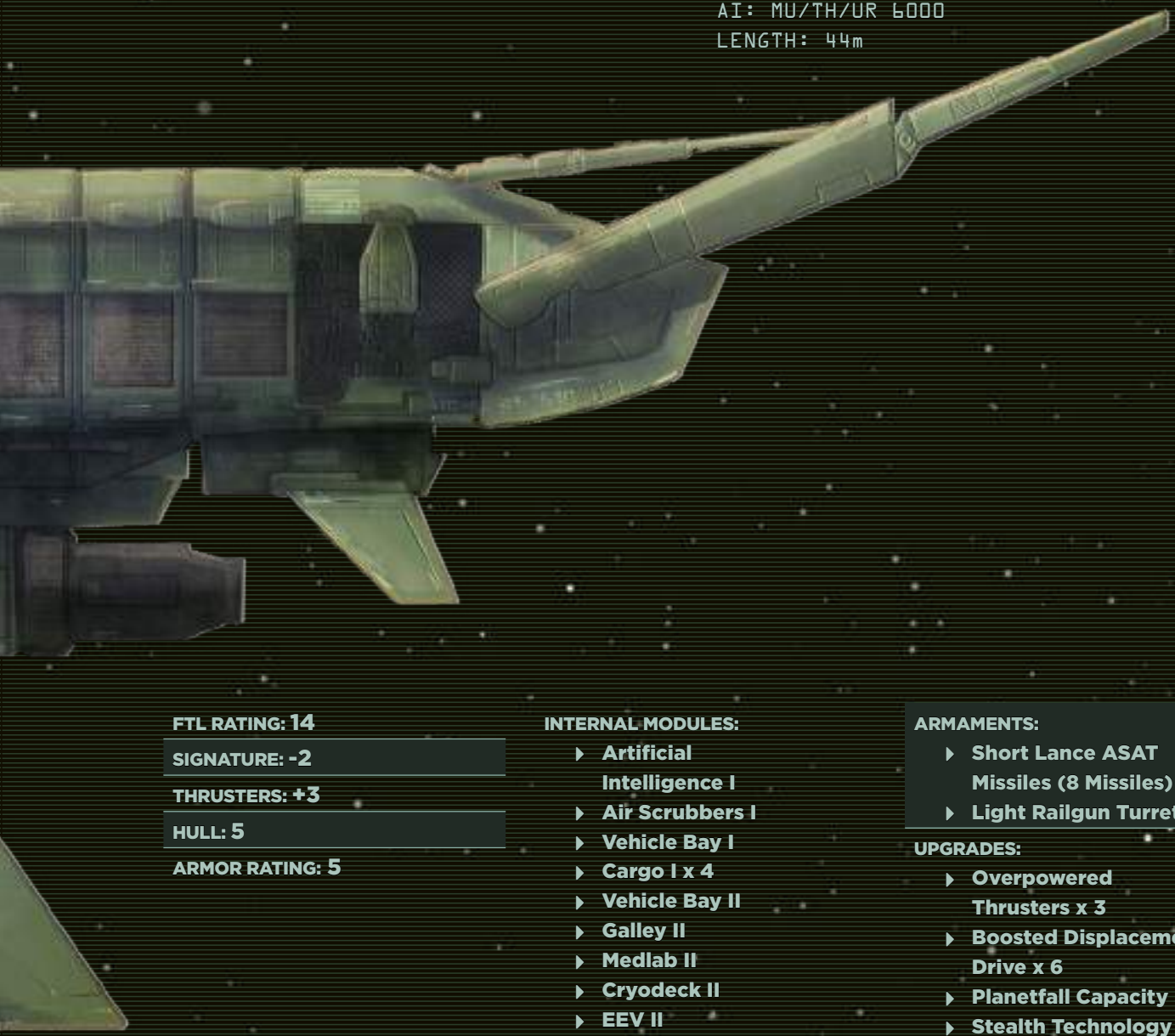
HAWKER SYSTEMS

MODEL

V-10A1113 MANTIS

V-10A1113 MANTIS

MANUFACTURER: Hawker Systems
COST: $86,000,000
CREW: 2
TROOP CAPACITY: 12
AI: MU/TH/UR 6000
LENGTH: 44m



FTL RATING: 14

SIGNATURE: -2

THRUSTERS: +3

HULL: 5

ARMOR RATING: 5

INTERNAL MODULES:

- Artificial Intelligence I
- Air Scrubbers I
- Vehicle Bay I
- Cargo I x 4
- Vehicle Bay II
- Galley II
- Medlab II
- Cryodeck II
- EEV II
- Docking Umbilical II
- Cargo III
- Tractor Hitch III

ARMAMENTS:

- Short Lance ASAT Missiles (8 Missiles)
- Light Railgun Turret

UPGRADES:

- Overpowered Thrusters x 3
- Boosted Displacement Drive x 6
- Planetfall Capacity
- Stealth Technology

KREMLIN CLASS HUNTER-DESTROYER

NORCOMM LIU

MODEL

VP-153D KREMLIN

FTL RATING: 3

SIGNATURE: +2

THRUSTERS: -1

HULL: 15

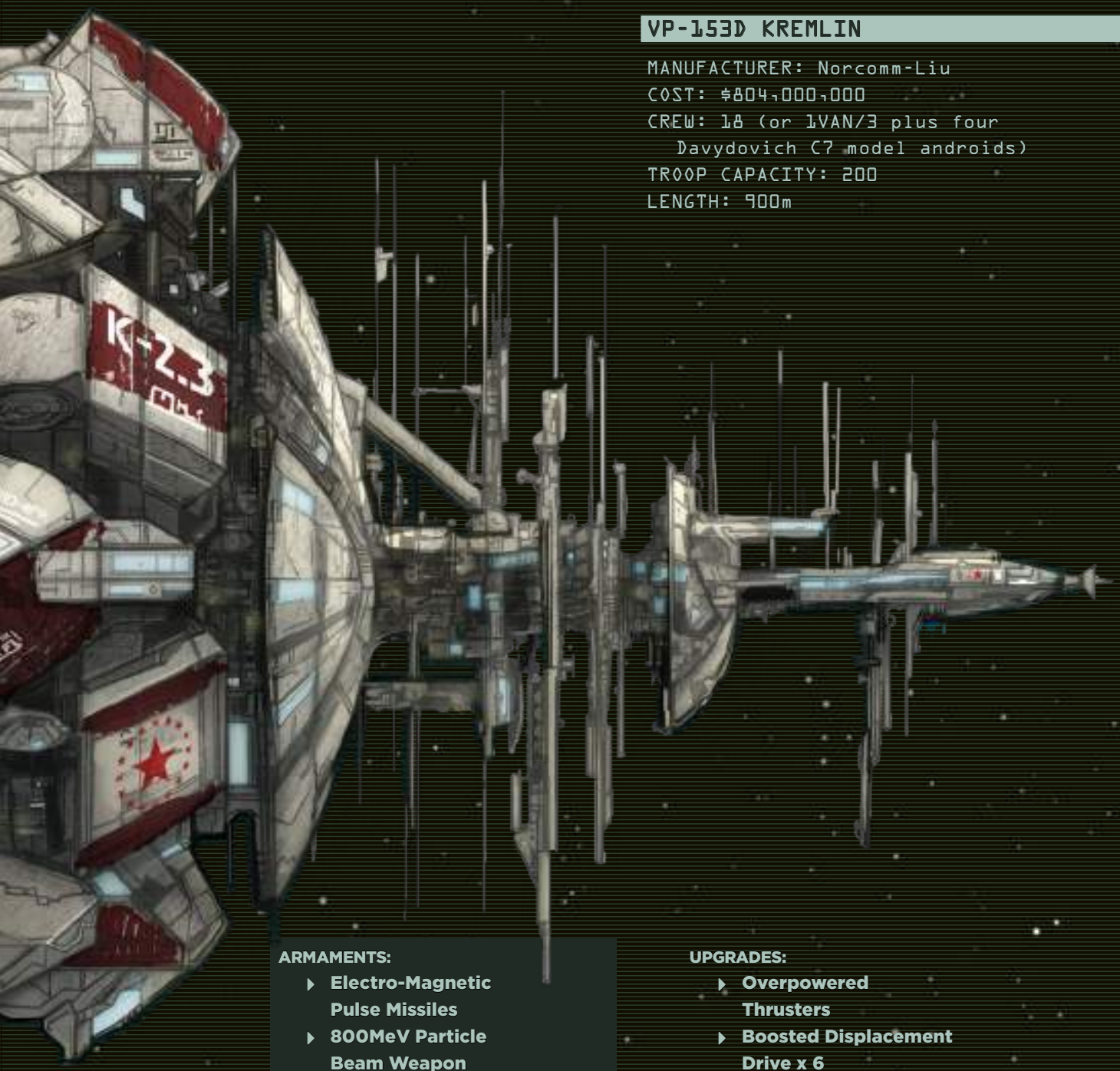
ARMOR RATING: 10

INTERNAL MODULES:

- Artificial Intelligence I
- Air Scrubbers IV
- Cargo Bay V
- Cryo Deck IV
- Docking Umbilical II x 2
- EEV II x 6
- Galley IV
- Hangar IV x 2
- Vehicle Bay IV
- Medlab II x 2

VP-153D KREMLIN

MANUFACTURER: Norcomm-Liu
COST: $804,000,000
CREW: 18 (or 1VAN/3 plus four Davydovich C7 model androids)
TROOP CAPACITY: 200
LENGTH: 900m



ARMAMENTS:

- Electro-Magnetic Pulse Missiles
- 800MeV Particle Beam Weapon
- 400MeV Particle Beam Weapon
- Short Lance ASAT Missiles
- Orbital Mines

UPGRADES:

- Overpowered Thrusters
- Boosted Displacement Drive x 6
- Added Hardpoints x 2

BOUGAINVILLE CLASS ATTACK TRANSPORT

MODEL LUNNAR-WELSUN

USCMC BOUGAINVILLE

USCMC BOUGAINVILLE

MANUFACTURER: Lunnar-Welsun Industries
COST: $265,000,000
CREW: 8 (or MU/TH/UR 7000 plus one Hyperdyne 341-B model android)
TROOP CAPACITY: 40
LENGTH: 300m

FTL RATING: 6
SIGNATURE: +0
THRUSTERS: +2
HULL: 9
ARMOR RATING: 9

INTERNAL MODULES:

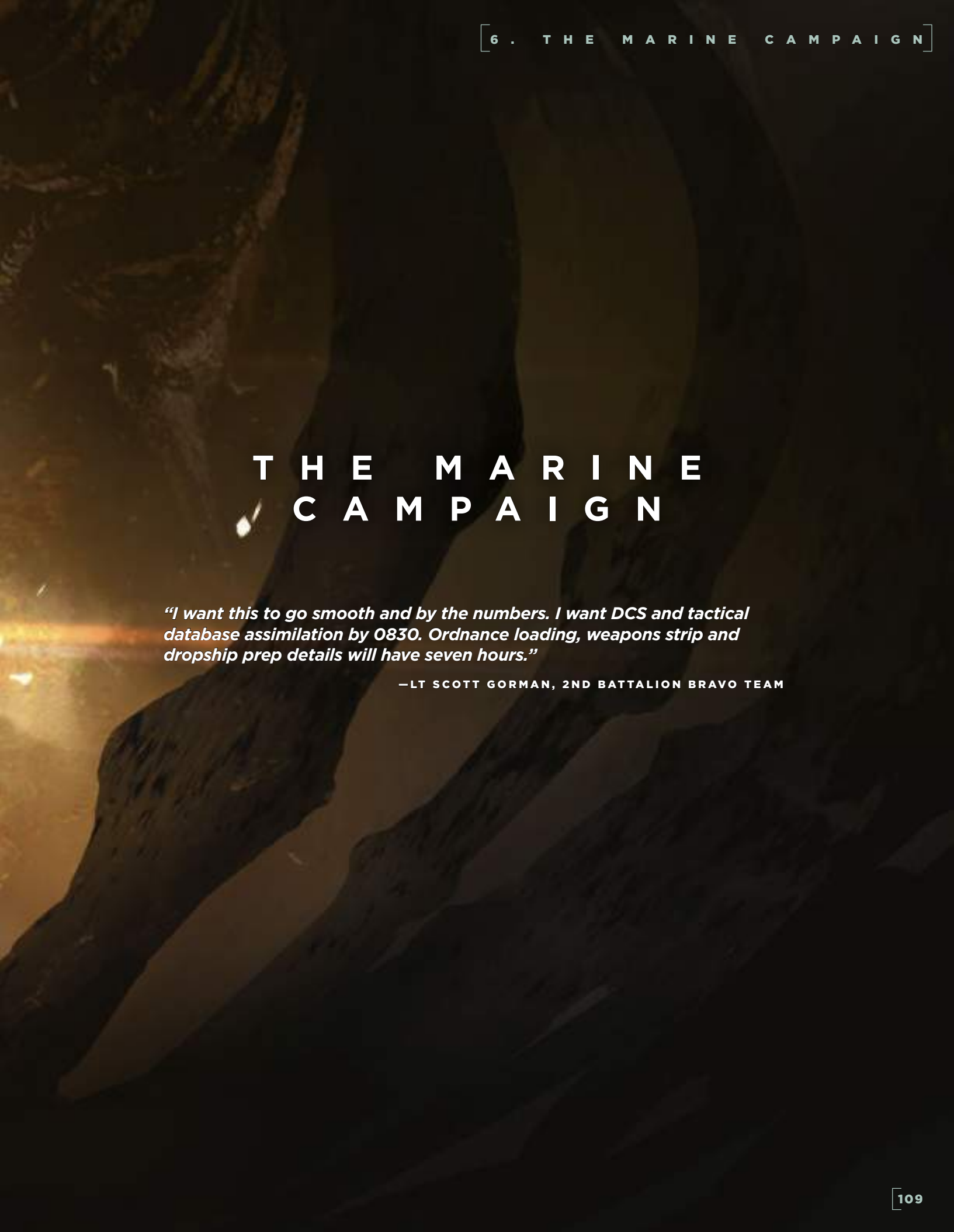
- Artificial Intelligence I
- Air Scrubbers III
- Cargo Bay III
- Cryo Deck IV
- Docking Umbilical II
- EEV II x 6
- Galley III
- Hangar IV
- Vehicle Bay IV
- Medlab II x 2
- Science Lab III

ARMAMENTS:

- Short Lance ASAT Missiles (8 missiles)
- Heavy Railgun Turret
- Tactical Nukes (10 missiles)
- Medium Railgun Turret
- CWIS Laser Array

UPGRADES:

- Boosted Displacement Drives x 6
- Enhanced Sensors
- Overpowered Thrusters
- Planetfall Capacity



THE MARINE CAMPAIGN

"I want this to go smooth and by the numbers. I want DCS and tactical database assimilation by 0830. Ordnance loading, weapons strip and dropship prep details will have seven hours."

—LT SCOTT GORMAN, 2ND BATTALION BRAVO TEAM

This chapter gives you a framework for setting up a campaign for the ALIEN RPG on the war-torn Frontier. The PCs are Marines and part of the 33rd Marine Assault Unit's Kilo Company, 2nd Platoon—operating out of the Conestoga Frigate USS *Tamb'Itam*. The ship will start off partaking in normal operations until the unit garners the attention of General Vaughn (page 200) and gets put on detached assignment under her command.

Later chapters will give an overview of the campaign, describe the key players, and offer complete missions to send your PCs on. Together, the material in this book gives you the tools you need to play an open-world campaign in the ALIEN universe. It won't be a linear campaign from start to finish, but rather a framework and a toolbox for you, the GM. Strap in, it's going to be a rough ride. ■

THE UNIT

The PCs belong to the famous 33rd Marine Assault Unit (MAU), a well-equipped expeditionary force that stands ready in the Outer Veil to respond rapidly to a threat, a crisis or a war. MAUs take infantry units, dropships and other forces from Earth-based Marine regiments or aerospace wings to create an adaptable and self-sufficient combat ready force. It is for good reason that the 33rd is nicknamed "the Gunfighters."

A reinforced battalion of around 2,200 troops, the MAU is commanded by a colonel who depends on three lieutenant colonels to run the three main parts of the MAU: the battalion landing team (3rd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment), the dropship squadron (DMLA-265) and the combat logistics battalion element (Combat Logistics Battalion 33).

BEGINNINGS

Whilst the parent units of the troops and flight crews are based at Camp Pendleton in California, at the start of the campaign the "Gunfighters" have been forward deployed to Orbital Fort Nebraska on the Ariarcus moon colony in the star system Kruger 60—only they never make it there. On route, the Frontier War erupts. The colony becomes an embittered battle as a UPP invasion force clashes with UA loyalists and a few hundred marines desperate to evacuate the moon. All that soon became moot as an unidentified force rains black death on the colony—killing most and mutating the few survivors into monsters (See the Cinematic scenario *Destroyer of Worlds* for details). Before the PCs make it back to Fort Nebraska, the Kruger 60 system is declared a quarantine zone (if the PCs decide to go there anyway at any time, see page 139).

BATTALION LANDING TEAM

The chief fighting force of the MAU is the 3rd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment. It is composed of an HQ services company and three rifle companies—designated India Company, Kilo Company and Lima Company. The battalion is usually reinforced with a tank platoon, an artillery battery and an armored recon platoon.

HEADQUARTERS SERVICE COMPANY: This company includes the battalion commander, Lieutenant Colonel "Mac" Hanrahan and his senior NCO, Sergeant Major Ruiz Pagonis. Its mission is to command the battalion and support its marines with additional assets. It is organized into various sections: headquarters, personnel, intelligence, operations, supply & logistics, communications, and the battalion's medical aid station. It also includes a recon section, composed of four dedicated marksmen armed with M42A scope rifles and their spotters, all wearing camouflage ghillie suits. These snipers provide support and surveillance as needed for the company commanders.

RIFLE COMPANIES: Each of these 86-man companies is commanded by a captain and assisted by a lieutenant as the company executive officer (XO). The three companies are made up of three 22-man rifle platoons and a company headquarters, which, in addition to the two officers already mentioned, includes a gunnery sergeant and a driver.

A rifle platoon is where the player characters belong, it is their home within the Colonial Marines. Each platoon is commanded by a lieutenant and consists of two sections plus a headquarters element made up of the lieutenant, a platoon sergeant and an android who serves as a technical specialist. The platoon sergeant, usually a staff sergeant, advises the commander and serves as the second-in-command.

Each section is split into four-man squads and these can themselves split into pairs of Marines. All rifle platoons in the 33rd MAU are allocated a pair of M577 APCs for transport and fire support. In a drop operation, the platoon will also be allocated a couple of dropships from the dropship squadron (DMLA-265).

TANK PLATOON: Composed of ten M40-E1 Ridgeway heavy tanks, the platoon is designed to provide a powerful, direct-fire punch for the battalion. Tanks may go into action as a single unit or may be sent off to support individual companies.

HEAVY ORDNANCE PLATOON: Fire support is provided by this platoon, which fields four M292 self-propelled artillery guns, two M201 multiple launch rocket systems and four M579 air defense APCs.

ARMORED RECON PLATOON: Serving as a fast-moving armored reconnaissance unit, this platoon consists of six XT-37 FAVs and two M577s. The APCs of this platoon carry only a driver, gunner and commander. The unit ranges across the area of operations, provoking the enemy and engaging lightly armored vehicles using hit and run tactics.

DROPSHIP SQUADRON

Dropship squadrons are rotated through the 33rd MAU. Currently, air support is provided by DMLA-265, a squadron of ten UD-4L, two UD-4C, and two UD-4S Cheyenne dropships. Lieutenant Colonel Eileen Morglas, a veteran pilot, commands the squadron. The role of the dropship is not set, it is a multi-mission aircraft that may be used to drop an M570 APC and its infantry unit onto a hostile planet, it can carry out aerial reconnaissance, medical evacuation, search and rescue operations, transportation, or even frontline fire support—all in the same day.

Should the battalion commander want all of the infantry companies dropped into a combat zone along with their APCs, in a single assault, nine of the dropships will be needed. More often though, there is also other equipment to be transported, close air support required, and a command ship needed for the use of the colonel in order to coordinate the drop. In this event, each dropship will serve as a shuttle, returning to orbit after landing its payload of Marines, to pick up the next unit due to be dropped onto the landing zone.

COMBAT LOGISTICS BATTALION

Less glamorous than both the battalion landing team and the dropship squadron, Combat Logistics Battalion 33 is composed of eight platoons, each one dedicated to supporting the battalion in a different way. These platoons cover medical services, maintenance, supply, combat engineering, communications support, landing zone operations and catering services. A headquarters platoon, led by Lieutenant Colonel "Bull" Griffin, coordinates the work of these units. ■

LIEUTENANT COLONEL "MAC" HANRAHAN

COMMANDER 3/5 MARINE BATTALION LANDING TEAM

Colonel Hanrahan is in his 40s, a grizzled veteran officer of numerous campaigns and skirmishes. He spent much of his career in armored recon and in tanks, and he has pushed hard to get the M40-E Ridgeway tank platoon attached to the battalion. His preferences often mean that infantry missions can be light on manpower, with platoons being given missions that other MAUs might assign a full company too. Mac doesn't like to waste the battalion resources, which means that the player characters will often feel as if they've been left to get on with a job, without much hope of backup.

STRENGTH 3, AGILITY 3, WITS 5, EMPATHY 5

HEALTH: 3

SKILLS: Command 4, Manipulation 3, Ranged Combat 2, Comtech 2

TALENT: Pull Rank, Take Control

GEAR: M4A3 Service Pistol

LIEUTENANT KAREN ECKHART

DROPSHIP PILOT, DMLA-265

Lieutenant Eckhart is a junior officer and a competent pilot. She currently flies the dropship named "Friday the 13th", which is often allocated to 2nd Platoon, Kilo Company during troop transport drops. Her crew chief is Sergeant Samuel Petrovich. Eckhart likes to keep her ship out of harm's way and will get nervous about orders that will result in a risky landing or flying into heavy enemy fire.

STRENGTH 3, AGILITY 5, WITS 4, EMPATHY 2

HEALTH: 3

SKILLS: Piloting 3, Mobility 2, Comtech 2, Observation 4, Stamina 1

TALENT: Like the Back of Your Hand ("Friday the 13th")

GEAR: M4A3 Service Pistol, 4 Flares, Seegson P-DAT

THE USS TAMB'ITAM

The Conestoga-class assault frigate *USS Tamb'Itam* is one of the original dozen Cony's built for the Corps—and is the oldest ship in the Gunfighters' arsenal. Sometimes called the "warhorse" by those who've served on her, the *Tamb'Itam* is capable of transporting two Marine platoons along with their four dropships, four M577 APCs, and four XT-37 FAVs—dropping them onto a planetary surface and then supporting them from orbit.

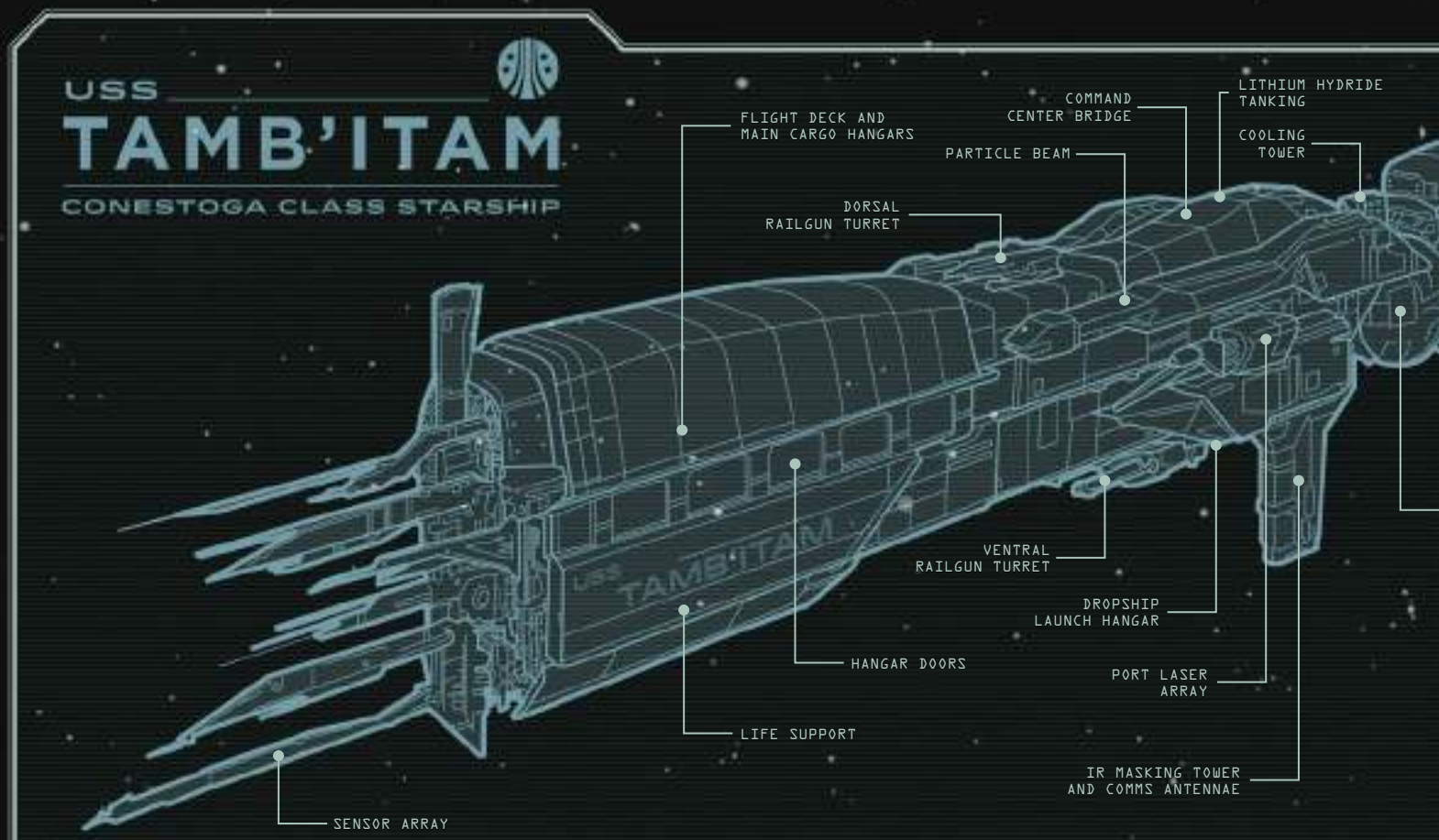
There are living and working facilities aboard for long periods on station. For the PCs during this campaign, the USS *Tamb'Itam* is home base. The players should make themselves at home.

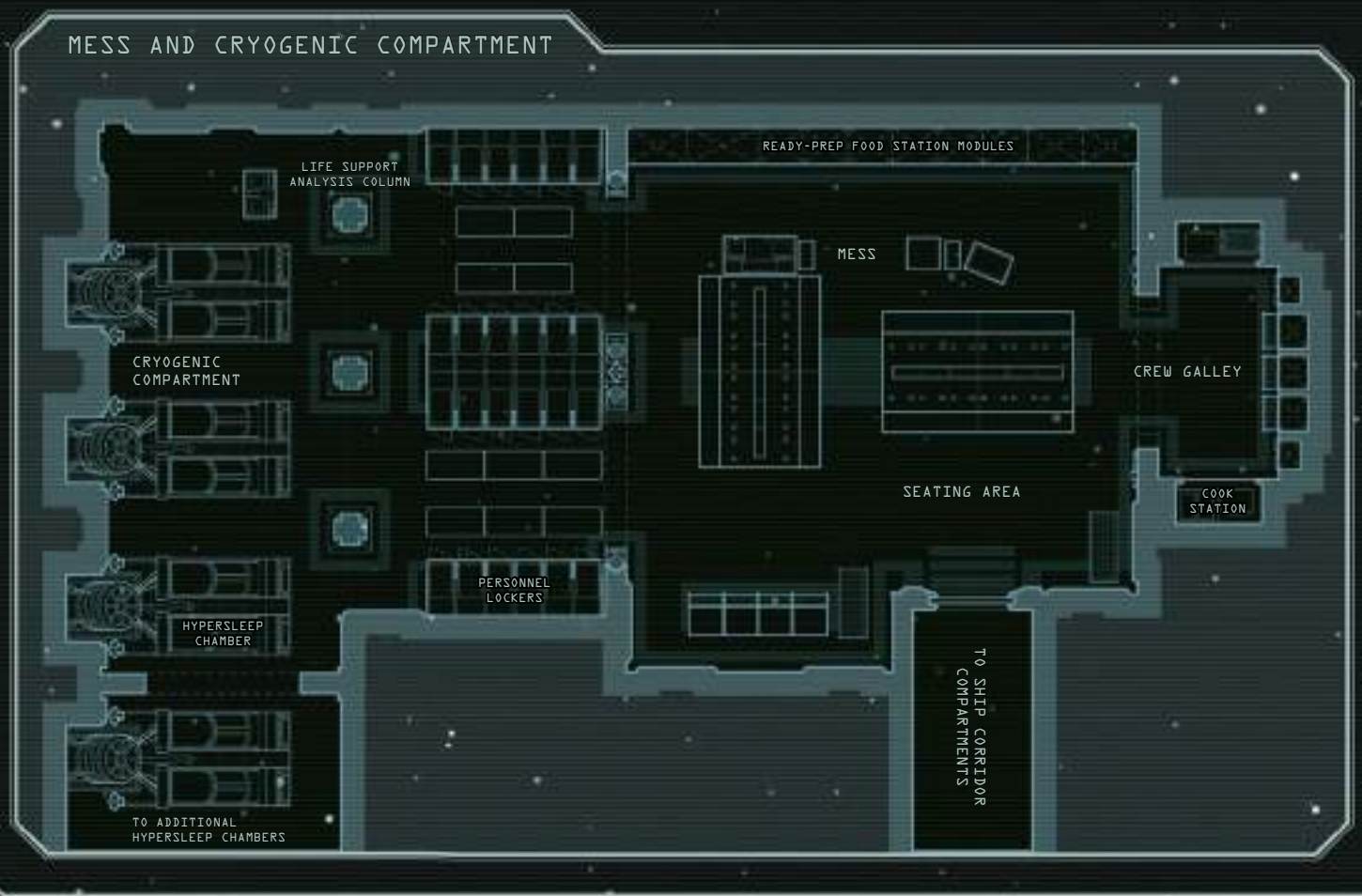
THE 33RD MAU FLEET

The 33rd is currently operating with only six assault frigates and three attack transports. These are the sibling ships of the USS *Tamb'Itam*—her Conestoga class sisters and her little brothers of the newer Bougainville class.

Conestoga Assault Frigates
- **USS Kanawha**
- **USS Salinas**
- **USS Alameda**
- **USS Cimarron**
- **USS Caloosahatchee**

Bougainville Attack Transports
- **USS Caliente**
- **USS Taluga**
- **USS Merrimack**


USS
TAMB'ITAM
CONESTOGA CLASS STARSHIP
FLIGHT DECK AND MAIN CARGO HANGARS
COMMAND CENTER BRIDGE
LITHIUM HYDRIDE TANKING
PARTICLE BEAM
COOLING TOWER
DORSAL RAILGUN TURRET
VENTRAL RAILGUN TURRET
DROPSHIP LAUNCH HANGAR
HANGAR DOORS
PORT LASER ARRAY
LIFE SUPPORT
IR MASKING TOWER AND COMMS ANTENNAE
SENSOR ARRAY


MESS AND CRYOGENIC COMPARTMENT
READY-PREP FOOD STATION MODULES
LIFE SUPPORT ANALYSIS COLUMN
MESS
CRYOGENIC COMPARTMENT
CREW GALLEY
SEATING AREA
COOK STATION
PERSONNEL LOCKERS
HYPERSLEEP CHAMBER
TO SHIP CORRIDOR COMPARTMENTS
TO ADDITIONAL HYPERSLEEP CHAMBERS

LAUNCH HANGAR

MAIN GARAGE CARGO LOCK
LAUNCH PREP WARNING LIGHT
REMOTE-MOVEABLE LAUCH PREP WARNING LIGHT
DROPSHIP SLIDING LAUCH PANEL
DROPSHIP STAND-BY PAD
EXTERNAL LOADING CARGO LOCKS
CARGO LOCK STORAGE BAY
HANGAR DECK
FLOOR EXTERNAL CARGO LOCK
POWER LOADER BAY
READY ROOM
LOCKERS

STAGING AREA

DROPSHIP LAUNCH HANGAR
POWER LOADER BAY
READY ROOM
PERSONNEL LOCKERS
BENCH
ARMORY
WEAPON RACK
TO ELEVATORS AND STAIRWELL
PERSONNEL LOCKERS
BRIEFING ROOM
BENCH

COMMAND AND BARRACKS SECTION

The Command Center is located just behind and above the *Tamb'Itam's* dorsal rail gun. This area contains a Tactical Operations room for strategic planning, the MU/TH/UR 9000 computer core interface, and the ship's Bridge—an auxiliary center for taking manual control of the ship. The Bridge has weapons, command, piloting, and navigation posts, plus a large forward viewport equipped with retractable shielding.

The Barracks area sits one deck above the dropship hangar. It is a self-contained block with access to other parts of the ship. Downtime might be spent here, either in orbit or on long-duration patrol. When beginning a mission, Marines use the stairs or elevators to reach the lockers and ready room adjacent to the hangar.

BRIG: Three secure prison cells for prisoners or unruly Marines.

BUNK ROOMS: Each room holds four sleep racks as well as a head and shower. Between the rooms is a rec area for off-duty relaxation.

DUTY ROOM: This office is both a communications room and a visitor reception area.

GYM: Marines are keen to stay lean and mean. Some use this well equipped fitness center, while others simply run the ship's central passageway.

COMMUNAL SHOWERS AND HEADS: These supplement facilities are useful for CBRN scrub downs.

CRYOGENIC COMPARTMENTS: There are four of these compartments aboard, each with twelve hypersleep chambers.

MEDBAY: This infirmary has four beds, an AutoDoc, and facilities for major combat surgery.

OFFICER AND NCO QUARTERS: These modest staterooms, lounge, and offices are for platoon commanders.

STORES: This supply depot stores uniforms, spare parts, and anything else not related to combat.

REPAIR BAY: A technical workshop used to maintain, repair, or modify equipment and synthetics, the Repair Bay adds a +2 bonus to any **HEAVY MACHINERY** rolls made on premises.

MISSION SPECIFIC

The modular nature of Conestoga frigates like the *Tamb'Itam* means that vehicles and equipment carried by her can vary to fit a variety of mission parameters. For example, instead of four standard Cheyenne dropships, the number of ships carried can be a mix of various types, including gunships and skycranes. During wartime, the *Tamb'Itam* typically carries two Ridgeway tanks in the lower garage as well.

Within one Shift of work, Conies like the *Tamb'Itam* can be fitted with an EVAC starfighter rack that carries up to six of these fightercraft externally for escort and defense. Pilots can either enter hypersleep in their cockpits for travel or spacewalk to their ships as needed. Finally, given two Shifts time, a full USCMC engineering team can reconfigure the cargo area to be used as an auxiliary hangar bay—one large enough to hold a Class G craft.

DROPSHIP LAUNCH HANGAR AND STAGING AREA

Shuttles or dropships are stored in the huge cargo hold above this hangar and lowered into the hangar ready for a mission. There is space for two dropships at a time, one on the stand-by pad, one on the launch door. Once the Marines and their APC are aboard, a hoist lowers the dropship through the launch doors into a launch bay where it is held by grapples. Inner doors close, outer doors open and the grapples release to launch the dropship.

MAIN GARAGE: This garage houses the *Tamb'Itam's* four M577 APCs and four XT-37s. In the ship's standard configuration, additional garage levels in her bow can accommodate up to six mobile artillery vehicles (these must either disembark directly from the landed frigate or be carried planet-side by skycrane dropships).

BRIEFING ROOM: Used to brief flight crews or maintenance personnel.

FLOOR CARGO LOCK: A large airlock in the hangar floor, activated from a control panel.

LOCKER ROOM: Marine armor and combat clothing is kept here. Marines change to ready themselves for the mission, then go through to the ready room.

POWER LOADER BAY: Each of these bays holds four power loaders, along with recharge equipment and maintenance tools.

READY ROOM: The mission prep room, filled with ammo cabinets and weapon racks as well as equipment lockers. This is where Marines will load and check their guns. ■

INSIDE THE SQUAD

Where do the PCs fit in a large and complex organization like the Marine Assault Unit? They are the members of a rifle squad in the 2nd platoon, Kilo Company. Their platoon commander is Lieutenant Maria Casados, assisted by her platoon sergeant, Staff Sergeant Szymborska. The platoon has a single android, named Roy, assigned as a technical specialist.

In a Colonial Marines campaign, the four-Marine squad provides a perfect roleplaying-sized unit. The squad is divided into a Rifle Team, consisting of a pair of riflemen, each armed with the M41 pulse rifle, and a Gun Team that consists of a machine gunner (armed with the M56 Smartgun) partnered with a rifleman. Two squads form a section, commanded by a sergeant, which means that if there are more than four players at the table, then the fifth player can take the role of the section commander. See page 40 for more on this.

Other Marines in the platoon can serve as replacement PCs should the players, um, lose theirs.

LIEUTENANT MARIA CASADOS

COMMANDER, 2ND PLATOON, KILO COMPANY

Casados is a tall, lean infantry officer with a good track record. She is rather frosty, though and has trouble getting on with Kilo Company's other platoon commander, Lt. Rix. Casados likes to use her android command adjutant Roy as an advisor on all operations. She is a clever tactician, but often fails to communicate her plans and strategies to the squads—creating a lack of confidence in her abilities. Casados is great at getting squads where they need to be, but then lets them get on with the job without much interference.

STRENGTH 2, AGILITY 4, WITS 3, EMPATHY 5

HEALTH: 2

SKILLS: Ranged Combat 2, Comtech 4, Command 2, Manipulation 2

TALENT: Pull Rank

GEAR: M3 Personnel Armor, M4A3 Service Pistol, binoculars.

STAFF SERGEANT ADAM SZYMBORSKA

PLATOON SERGEANT

Szymborska assists Lt Casados with platoon discipline, administration, training, and morale. He's the senior NCO of the platoon and makes frequent spot checks on uniform, equipment, and procedures–basically making himself a pain in the butt for the enlisted soldiers. Szymborska is a short man but has immense physical presence and an icy stare that can freeze a Marine's heart. Casados relies too heavily on the android Roy, which causes some consternation with Szymborska.

STRENGTH 5, AGILITY 3, WITS 4, EMPATHY 4

HEALTH: 5

SKILLS: Close Combat 2, Mobility 2, Ranged Combat 3, Command 3

TALENT: Field Commander, Light Sleeper

GEAR: M4A3 Pistol, hand radio.

A NOTE FROM MU/TH/UR: For groups that want to play something a little different from the typical squad, advanced options include creating a Recon or CBRN team to replace the Rifle Team—or an Assault Team to replace the Gun Team. Swapping out standard squad components for any of these alters the mission profile of the entire squad, not just the Fire Team. Squads that are assigned Assault Teams are most often used for urban pacification and/or securing an entrenched position, those with CBRN Teams are used in situations where there is a biological, chemical, or radiological threat, and those with Recon Teams are often the first into a combat zone with little to no support. ■

ROY

HYPERDYNE SYSTEMS MODEL 341R
COMMAND ADJUTANT SYNTHETIC

Roy is the Marine command adjutant android assigned to 2nd platoon, Kilo Company. Like all platoon androids, he serves as a maintenance and repair engineer but also acts as a scientific advisor, a particularly useful role when operating on alien worlds. Lt. Casados leans heavily on Roy for advice and information, and the android is always ready with the facts and assessments she requires. This reliance on the synthetic human has frustrated Staff Sergeant Szymborska, who tends to mistrust the android. Roy has a calm, unflustered demeanor, and he does not respond to the jokes and put-downs of the troops.

STRENGTH 6, AGILITY 4, WITS 8, EMPATHY 2

HEALTH: 6

SKILLS: Heavy Machinery 3, Piloting 2, Comtech 4, Medical Aid 3

TALENT: Fast Reflexes

GEAR: Flashlight, system diagnostic device, hand radio.

FORGET THE CHAIN OF COMMAND

Military roleplaying requires military rank. The squad leader is a corporal and commands one of the fireteams, whilst a lance corporal is in charge of the other. This squad, together with a second squad, is commanded by a sergeant as one of the two sections of the platoon. The section sergeant gets his orders from the platoon commander, the lieutenant, but at the game table, the sergeant simply acts as a relay between the platoon commander and the rest of the PCs. Forget the "chain of command" and let the players decide their own fate.

Once the mission is underway, it is they who decide what the squad does, where it goes and how it tackles problems. There is no leader sat at the roleplaying table, all of the players have an equal say in what happens, just like any other roleplaying game. We can pretend that the officer in command came up with the ruse, or just assume that she goes along with the squad. In the end all that matters is that the players (as a squad) decide themselves what they are going to do. Colonial Marine rank doesn't really have a place at the roleplaying table and has no real bearing on decision-making amongst the players. Treat it just as a simple title, rather than a command privilege.

NON-PLAYER CHARACTER MARINES

The players create their Colonial Marine characters using the rules in Chapter 4, and you as GM control any spare NPC Marines in the section. No matter what their rank, the players are the ones calling the shots and making the decisions, with the rest of the squad or section quietly going along with them. If there are less than four players, it is strongly recommended that one of them take on the role of the squad leader. No-one wants to be ordered around by an NPC. By having control of the squad this way, the players represent a single fighting unit. The second squad will be controlled by you as GM and typically serves a secondary or auxiliary function during a scenario.

PLAYER CASUALTIES

With almost every scenario featuring one or more deadly firefights, the chance of a player character succumbing to a fatal bullet wound or alien acid attack is quite high. In this situation, the NPC Marines in the second squad can serve as a pool of new characters for bereaved players. The player in need of a fresh character can create their own new Marine based on one of the NPCs or choose from one of the pre-generated Marine characters on this spread. ■

PRIVATE GERALD WAYNE "RAT" FINKS

MARINE RIFLEMAN

Everybody calls you Rat Finks—and it's not just because of your unfortunate last name. It's not because you're a little guy with big ears. It's not even the crossed-out cartoon rat painted on the side of your helmet. Last year your unit was ambushed on O'Bannon's World. Cut off without supplies for over two weeks, you had to eat rodents to survive. You left the enemy a little surprise every time you retreated—booby-trapped dead vermin with M40 grenades stuck up their asses. By the time you were EVACed, you'd killed two dozen bastards with your rat ass traps. Good riddance.

STRENGTH 2, AGILITY 5, WITS 4, EMPATHY 3

HEALTH: 2

SKILLS: Mobility 2, Ranged Combat 2, Observation 3, Survival 3

TALENT: Stealthy

SIGNATURE ITEM: A rubber rat with a sparkler in its ass. You often tell a victim the booby trap story, light the rubber rat, hide it in their stuff, and wait for the fireworks to begin.

GEAR: M3 Personnel Armor, M41A Pulse Rifle, M4A2 Pistol with muzzle suppressor, silenced motion detector.

CORPORAL PILAR CARVALHO

COMTECH MARINE

You thought you were done playing soldier, but when your little brother Isaac was KIA under mysterious circumstances on Ariarcus, you re-upped to get the bastards responsible. A techie, you can trick open an airlock, hotwire a Daihotai, reroute power, and bypass almost any security system. You're good at what you do—you just don't want to be doing it. Your family's business—Carvalho's Cuts—raises cattle on Terraform 3. After you've avenged your brother by taking out as many UPP soldiers as you can find, you're going to use your new computer skills to upgrade their farm's automation.

STRENGTH 4, AGILITY 3, WITS 4, EMPATHY 3

HEALTH: 4

SKILLS: Heavy Machinery 3, Ranged Combat 2, Comtech 4, Observation 1

TALENT: Bypass

SIGNATURE ITEM: Your brother's posthumous Purple Heart.

GEAR: M3 Personnel Armor, M41A Pulse Rifle, Seegson System Diagnosis Device, electronic tools.

LANCE CORPORAL NEENAH YAZZIE

AFV MARINE

Everyone assumes that just because you're Native American you grew up in a casino and you have some kind of spirit guide or some shit. You were born in Brooklyn. The only gambling you did growing up was crossing Central Park at 3am. Your spirit guide is a slice of pizza from famous Ray's—and you're quick to point out that New York is the only place in the galaxy that can make a decent slice of pizza (the secret's in the tap water). While a skilled vehicle operator, you're a wash out from the Marine Aerospace Force. Still, you can pilot almost anything, you just can't land very well.

STRENGTH 4, AGILITY 5, WITS 3, EMPATHY 2

HEALTH: 4

SKILLS: Close Combat 1, Stamina 2, Piloting 4, Ranged Combat 3

TALENT: All-Terrain Driver

SIGNATURE ITEM: Pizza menu from Ray's

GEAR: M10 Ballistic Helmet, VP-70MA6 Pistol, BiMex Shades, combat knife.

SERGEANT DAVID ARTHUR WILKS

MARINE SECTION SERGEANT

Something out there hates you—hates everyone. It's big, black, has metal teeth, and butchered both your former unit and the entire colony on Rim. Only you and a girl named Billie survived—but half your face was burned off in the escape. After months in ICC quarantine, you were released back to the corps. You're not sure what happened to the girl. Your scars cut deep—all you see when you close your eyes is those gnashing teeth. You look like shit. You spook people—even your new unit is afraid of you. Alcohol and stims haven't helped yet, but you'll keep trying them.

STRENGTH 4, AGILITY 4, WITS 3, EMPATHY 3

HEALTH: 6

SKILLS: Close Combat 1, Mobility 2, Ranged Combat 4, Observation 1, Command 2

TALENT: Tough, Field Commander

SIGNATURE ITEM: Metal flask of tequila—a smooth reposado.

GEAR: M3 Personnel Armor, M41A Pulse Rifle, M4A3 Pistol, combat knife, six doses of Neversleep, two doses of X Stims.

PRIVATE GENERIC JARHEAD

GENERIC MARINE RIFLEMEN

Your podunk colony was just a dead-end ball of dirt that you were determined not to die on. Since you signed up with the Corps, you've been shot and stabbed by people you don't know. You've stared into the pitch darkness between the stars and felt the hot breath of deadly alien lifeforms on the back of your neck. It's damn dangerous out here, and every colony looks just like yours—a worthless piece of rock. You realize you might have avoided dying on one dead end dirt ball just to die on another. Until then, you'll keep sending mommy and daddy your checks to help them get by while they wait for the colony to start paying off. You'll also keep staring longingly at that pic of your childhood sweetheart—you just know they'll be faithful and wait for you—why wouldn't they? You're a goddamn Colonial Marine, after all.

STRENGTH 5, AGILITY 5, WITS 2, EMPATHY 2

HEALTH: 5

SKILLS: Close Combat 2, Mobility 3, Ranged Combat 3, Stamina 1, Survival 1

TALENT: Past the Limit

GEAR: M3 Personnel Armor, M41A Pulse Rifle, M4A3Pistol, flashlight, medkit, four grenades, combat knife.

COMBAT PROCEDURES

NPCS IN COMBAT

How do you as GM roleplay the NPC Marines? Let them take a back seat, they don't have much initiative, they don't seem to come up with any decent ideas and none are especially brave. They might do a decent job of guarding a corridor or patrolling a riverbank, but don't give them a complex or risky task to accomplish—that's for the players' Marines to tackle!

In combat, it can prove extremely taxing for you to make all of the task rolls required to keep all of the NPCs in the fight, whilst also controlling members of the force that is opposing them. So the trick is to keep things simple. We advise you to use the standard stats for a Colonial Marine (page 220) for all NPC Marines in the PCs' unit, to simplify book-keeping.

Another trick is to send NPC Marines "off screen" to perform some other task. And if they are present in combat, allow only one of them to carry out an attack or some other significant action in a Round, with the rest staying passive or just helping the acting Marine. Again, this simplifies your job, it emphasizes the NPCs' lack of initiative and most crucial of all, it emphasizes the role of the PCs. This last point is the most important of all. Nothing is more important than the abilities, actions, and contributions of the players' characters. The accompanying NPC Marines are only there to add a little backup firepower and to provide someone (other than the PCs) for the opposition to shoot at!

WE'VE GOT WHEELS

Marine platoons in a Marine Assault Unit are allocated two M577 APCs. These wheeled armored personnel carriers can be used to transport two Marine squads (a section) overland. It has a crew of two: the driver and the sergeant commanding the section that is on-board. There is seating for twelve (that is two squads, plus four spare seats).

APCs serve as 'battle taxis' with the primary task of carrying infantrymen over rough terrain to where they can do their job. They are combat-capable, with most Marine M577s typically equipped with 20mm Gatling guns and a turreted phased-plasma cannon. These weapons are used to support the dismounted infantry and even destroy other armored vehicles, bunkers, and tanks. Surprisingly, a Marine does not spend his entire time on a planet inside the M577. The squad will be tasked with recon and combat patrols on foot, whilst the APCs might be detailed to other missions, such as recon, defense or transportation. But when the mission requires it, the M577 gives the squad mobility coupled with incredible firepower.

The allocation of an M577 APC for the mission is not guaranteed—if the mission requires a simple foot patrol, delivery of some bulky equipment or other cargo, the search of a colony complex or the extraction of a crashed pilot, for example, the dropship will take-off without an APC onboard. And sometimes the M577 itself is out of action in the workshop, forcing the Marine squads to leave the safety of the dropship on foot.

SEARCH & PATROL

A chief role of Colonial Marine squads is to patrol on foot. This patrolling involves moving through hostile or contested territory in order to locate enemy patrols or ambushes, to deny that territory to enemy forces and to scout out enemy outposts or installations. But the squad can also be tasked with rescuing comrades or civilians, it can be ordered to snatch a prisoner or to explore a location now suspected to be under enemy control. The "enemy" might be armed rebels, UPP soldiers, corporate mercenaries, xenomorphs or other hostile alien lifeforms.

The Stealth Mode rules (page 85 of the core rulebook) are ideal for handling search and patrol missions. You as GM decide what enemy forces exist in the patrol area, and whether that enemy is **ACTIVE** or **PASSIVE**. **ACTIVE** enemy forces are hunting for the Marines, they know the squad is in the area and are intent on cutting its members of or ambushing them. **PASSIVE** enemy forces are sentries, guards or enemy forces going about their allocated tasks. The GM should draw only one initiative card for each distinct squad of NPCs, and one other for the NPC Marines tagging along with the player characters.

CROSS-COUNTRY MOVEMENT

What distance can a Marine squad cover whilst patrolling? That all depends on the type of terrain the squad is traversing. You may track this movement on a large-scale map of the region.

- **OPEN: Wide open terrain such as rocky desert, grassland, or clearings**
- **RUGGED: Terrain that is cluttered with obstacles, such as hills, dunes, or woodland**
- **IMPEDED: Terrain that is exceptionally difficult to traverse, such as jungle, swamps, or mountains**

Marching speed is the maximum movement that the squad is capable of, with weapons slung and no effort made to look out for ambushes or scout the area. This may be necessary to get out of a potential blast zone or to rendezvous with a dropship. Marching speed can only be maintained for one Shift. At your discretion, commanders making a successful COMMAND roll can push the squad to march for an additional Shift, but at the cost of each Marine suffering one point of damage. A Marine with the Second Wind talent does not suffer this damage.

TERRAIN	PATROL SPEED PER SHIFT	MARCHING SPEED PER SHIFT
OPEN	12 km	36 km
RUGGED	6 km	30 km
IMPEDED	3 km	12 km

OUTDOOR ZONES

Many Colonial Marine missions will take place in wilderness environments. The use of maps and zones still applies, however. The GM will need to prepare a general map of the local region, showing mission objectives, rivers, terrain features and enemy locations. A zone is an area of the local terrain roughly 25 meters across and will be identified by some feature of the landscape, perhaps a tree line, ditch or area strewn with boulders. Zones allow the combat area to be broken up into identifiable areas that make the combat both more interesting and easier to visualize.

THE AMBUSH

SETTING AN AMBUSH: The PCs can set up ambushes using the rules on page 90 of the core rulebook. The squad must lay in wait for the enemy, camouflaged or hiding in cover, and when the enemy unit appears, the Marine with the lowest **MOBILITY** skill level rolls for the squad (with a +2 modification). The GM rolls for the enemy unit, using the highest **OBSERVATION** skill level amongst its members. If the Marines succeed, they get a free action (slow or fast, but not both) before initiative cards are drawn. Failure indicates combat begins as normal, with both sides drawing initiative cards.

BEING AMBUSHED: It is likely at some point that an enemy unit will try to ambush the PCs' squad. This is a reversal of the situation above, with the PC with the highest **OBSERVATION** skill level rolling to spot the enemy. Meanwhile, the GM rolls for the enemy unit, using the lowest **MOBILITY** skill level (with a +2 modification) amongst its members. If the Marines succeed, they spot the ambush and combat begins as normal, with both sides drawing initiative cards. If they fail, then the enemy unit gets a free (slow or fast, but not both) before initiative cards are drawn.

CALL IN FIRE SUPPORT: Platoon commanders have the authority to call in airstrikes from UD-4 dropships attached to the unit and may also, under certain circumstances, ask for artillery support or even an orbital strike from a UAAC starship that is in low orbit (if one is on station).

Such firepower can only be called upon in extreme circumstances, the Colonial Marines on the ground are expected to close with the enemy and destroy them using all of the powerful weapons at their disposal. Squads desperately wanting fire support must contact their platoon commanders who then use a mobile field radio, or the comm system on the APC, to request an airstrike or fire mission from the company headquarters.

Typically, a **COMMAND** roll by the PCs will be needed to convince their platoon commander to call in the strike. If the highest-ranking officer present is a PC, they can call in the fire support directly with a **COMMAND** roll. In either case, use the table below to modify the skill roll. You should typically restrict such a request to once per mission. You may also rule that no fire support is available at all.

When the fire mission arrives, one Turn later, it either manifests as a targeted armor-piercing blast directed at a vehicle or building (effects as an AGM-220C Hellhound missile) or as a high explosive anti-personnel blast (effects as a Mk.16 Banshee 70 rocket). Both weapons are detailed on page 147 of the core rulebook. Whether or not the incoming fire hits or misses the target is left to your discretion and the needs of drama. ■

CALLING FOR FIRE SUPPORT

SITUATION	MODIFICATION
Fire Support is impractical	–2
Request is made by an NCO	–1
Marine unit has taken several casualties	+1
Officer has the Influence talent	+2
Mission is to locate targets for airstrikes	+2

MISSIONS

A Colonial Marines campaign is based on a series of missions, with downtime in between. Seven fleshed-out missions are included in Chapter 10 of this book, but you can also add other missions to the campaign, using the Campaign play rules in Chapter 12 of the core rulebook. This section describes the mission types listed on page 345 in more detail.

You can also incorporate elements from the backstory of The Frontier War (Chapter 9) into these generic missions, to tie things together. More on that below.

COLONIAL MARINE MISSIONS

D66	MISSION
11–13	Recon
14–15	Assault
16–21	Defense
22–23	Combat Patrol
24–26	Sabotage
31–32	Raid
33–35	Search and Rescue
36–42	Peacekeeping
43–46	Bug Hunt
51–52	Civil Evacuation
53–54	Space Assault
55	Space Traffic Security
56–62	Snatch and Grab
63–66	Investigation

MISSION:
RECON

SCOUT A LOCATION, GATHER INTELLIGENCE, AND THEN REPORT BACK.

On-the-ground intelligence is often required in war, and a Marine recon squad can sneak in, have a look, record, and map what it sees, then head out to a pre-arranged pick-up zone. The recon mission requires stealth. The enemy should not be alerted to the presence of the Marines, nor should any combat take place, save to protect their lives. If the enemy realizes that its force has been seen, it will rapidly relocate, rendering the entire recon mission useless. Key equipment may be left behind to maximize the squad's silence and speed of movement. Armor is often removed, as are helmets and even M56 Smartguns. Recon teams will often be in the field for several days and so must carry with them rations and sleeping equipment. For multi-day recon missions, the squad will have to construct a concealed and camouflaged observation post (OP) under cover of darkness, from which to observe the target.

MISSION:
ASSAULT

ATTACK AND HOLD AN OBJECTIVE BY FORCE.

Assault missions are a tough proposition. Not only does the Marine unit have to get in and fight its way to the objective, it then has to hold that objective—either for a predetermined time, or until relieved. This means that an assault squad will be carrying as much ammunition as humanly possible, along with sleeping gear, food, extra medical kits and radios. The assault is usually carried out behind enemy lines and so time is critical. Spend too long fighting to the objective and the enemy will have reinforced it ten-fold by the time the Marines get there. And what if your reinforcements or dropships don't arrive as planned, were diverted, shot down or called back? Can you fight your way back to friendly lines? You might have to...

MISSION:
DEFENSE

DEFEND A VULNERABLE POSITION FROM ENEMY ATTACK.

Sometimes the advantage is with the enemy and the Marines must improvise a defense using whatever manpower, materials and weaponry can be scavenged. It might be a colony, a mining outpost, science station or a farmstead. The odds are long, the ammunition low and the fortifications inadequate—but you and the civilians at the site will fight with grim determination. Watch out for weak points, consider how you will react to multiple attacks and make plans for being overrun.

MISSION:
SABOTAGE AND RAID

STRIKE AT THE ENEMY IN ITS OWN TERRITORY.

The commando raid aims to confuse and alarm the enemy with a surprise attack designed to force them to act defensively. The Marines must prepare for combat with a full complement of weaponry and large amounts of ammunition and equipment specific to the task at hand. The commander must plan meticulously, both the route in and out, and the role of every fire-team on the mission. Every Marine has a job to do and nothing is left to chance. The PCs' squad may even have conducted a recon patrol before the raid in order to gather helpful intel. Often sabotage is also carried out, perhaps by planting explosives at key locations, cutting pipelines or sabotaging crucial enemy equipment.

MISSION:
COMBAT PATROL

SECURE THE AREA AROUND YOUR LOCATION.

Combat patrols are sent out into contested areas to prevent the enemy from moving in, to monitor any enemy activity and to deal with it should it be encountered. Combat patrols always carry enough weaponry, armor, and ammunition for a stand-up fight. Marines must carry surveillance gear, as well as anything needed to negotiate the terrain (machetes, wire-cutters, ladders, etc.). The patrol may be routine and meet no opposition, or it might come face an aggressive enemy patrol—and should be prepared for it! The combat patrol is a security measure, patrolling around the limits of the territory that the Marines currently hold. IFF transponders will be essential if friendly sentry guns have been set-up.

MISSION:
SEARCH AND RESCUE

LOCATE AND EXTRACT FRIENDLY PERSONNEL WHILST UNDER FIRE.

When hostages are captured by terrorists, when aircrew are shot down over enemy territory, or when prisoners need to be rescued from an enemy camp, the Colonial Marines organize a search and rescue mission. Just like a raid, it requires careful planning, with each fire-team given a unique task. The Marines carry as much ammunition as possible and may also need to carry specialized weaponry such as electro-shock grenades, shotguns (for blowing open locked doors) and M314 motion trackers. Stealth and surprise are crucial to remain undetected for as long as possible, but once the enemy is aware of their presence, the Marines need to be ready to react with force. The extraction might be the most difficult part of the mission, ensuring all of the personnel get to a dropship. Some may be badly injured and difficult to transport, but no-one must be left behind. Should the dropship not arrive as planned, then the PCs must quickly come up with an alternative plan.

MISSION:
PEACEKEEPING

PROTECT A VULNERABLE COMMUNITY FROM THE VIOLENCE OF A RIVAL GROUP.

Colony worlds are fraught with tension. Sometimes several rival colonial settlements occupy just one world, elsewhere there may be competing factions within a single colony. Split by race, affiliation, political loyalties or some grievance, the factions are engaged in a tit-for-tat campaign of terror and violence. The MAU has been deployed to protect both sides from the violence. Under the umbrella of this larger mission, the squad will be engaged in many kinds of missions: rescue, combat patrol, recon, civil evacuation, defense, raid, snatch & grab or investigation. The enemy is a violent counter-insurgency force, hiding within the population at large. ID checks, roadblocks, security sweeps, random attacks and friendly civil defense forces are common facets of peacekeeping. By protecting the weaker faction, the Marines will automatically become a legitimate target for the opposing side.

MISSION:
BUG HUNT

EXTERMINATE AN ALIEN LIFE-FORM THAT IS THREATENING A COLONY.

Most so-called "garden worlds" have their flaws. It might be the extreme climate, deadly atmosphere or, more likely, some hostile indigenous life-form. Often this deadly creature was undetected during the first colonization but sometimes the life-form emerges without warning from a long period of hibernation. Although some colonies create self-defense or police units, these are often ill-equipped to deal with truly dangerous alien predators. Instead, the Marines are called upon but since "bug hunting" lacks the importance of other mission types, the Colonial Marine Corps typically dispatches only a single section to deal with the unintelligent alien threat. And that is usually enough. Bug hunting calls for good coordination with colonial authorities on the ground. Where has it attacked, and when? What wounds does it inflict? What kind of installations are in the threatened area? Are there any trapped civilians? Careful intelligence gathering might give the PCs a crucial edge in defeating the menace. Lots of ammunition as well as M240 Incinerator Units are a must.

MISSION:
CIVIL EVACUATION

ASSIST IN THE RAPID EVACUATION OF CIVILIANS UNDER THREAT.

This differs from the search and rescue mission in that the civilians here are not imprisoned or under fire at the start of the mission. A colonial population (usually numbering between a few dozen to a few thousand individuals) is under some immediate threat and must be evacuated by the Colonial Marines. The threat might be an impending natural disaster, a looming war or invasion, the emergence of a hostile life-form nearby or some deadly viral outbreak. The MAU will have a plan for orderly extraction, but of course the PCs will be on the front line. The small group of civilians that they are tasked with evacuating will be succumbing to the threat even as the Marines arrive. The mission to evacuate will be disorderly, dangerous and a race against time to prevent the colonists from being wiped out.

MISSION:
SPACE ASSAULT

INFILTRATE AND TAKE CONTROL OF A SPACE STATION OR STARSHIP.

The toughest of Marine combat tasks, a space assault involves crossing the vacuum of space or docking with the target installation. From there the Marines must negotiate airlocks, defended corridors and locked down sections in a series of firefights against an enemy that probably knows the installation very well. Mk.35 Pressure Suits must be worn in case of depressurization and a talented Marine with a Seegson Diagnostic Device should be able to bypass locked bulkhead doors. The space assault first requires that the station or ship's defenses be knocked out and rendered incapable of firing on an approaching dropship. If not, then the space-suited Marines will have to approach stealthily using space-maneuvering packs. Key mission goals are usually occupying engineering control and the bridge of the ship; with these secure the Marines can turn the tables on any remaining defenders.

MISSION:
SPACE TRAFFIC SECURITY

CARRY OUT CUSTOMS INSPECTIONS ON COMMERCIAL TRAFFIC.

The Colonial Marine Corps is often contracted to patrol the commercial spacelanes in order to enforce ICC regulations and deter hijackers, people smugglers and potential starship piracy. A single Conestoga frigate will carry a Marine section and loiter in real space in order to intercept commercial shipping. Along with an ICC inspector, one squad will transfer to the target vessel to carry out a routine search and inspection. After a week, the frigate enters hyperspace and journeys to a neighboring star system to continue its customs patrol there. Marines assigned to this two-month deployment consider themselves to have 'drawn the short straw'. Of course, when the PCs get this assignment, the ships they inspect will contain all manner of violent and dangerous surprises.

MISSION:
SNATCH AND GRAB

ENTER HOSTILE TERRITORY TO RETRIEVE A PERSON OR OBJECT OF VALUE.

Much like a search and rescue, the snatch and grab requires careful planning. Where is the target located? What are the strengths of the defenders? What are their routines? What about the layout of the location, or the surrounding area? Particular attention is paid to getting in and out successfully without being spotted. Of course, the PCs must prepare for combat and so carry plenty of ammo and weaponry. The prize might be a scientist, an enemy commander, a flight recorder, an alien sample, a satellite control system, a key piece of enemy technology, etc. Often the Marines may discover that the intel is out of date and that the prize has recently been relocated—forcing the squad (perhaps while under fire) to find out where it was moved to, and then rapidly change the plan to take this into account.

MISSION:
INVESTIGATION

RESPOND TO AN SOS AND BE PREPARED FOR ANY EVENTUALITY.

Perhaps responding to an automated SOS signal or to a loss of communications with a colony or a space station, Marines tasked with investigating such a situation are at a great disadvantage. They don't know what the threat is, what its size is, or even if there is a threat at all. Such missions are unnerving. Typically, a Conestoga-class frigate is dispatched carrying only a single Marine section commanded by the platoon's lieutenant. It might be a downed transmitter, it might be nothing—and so battalion HQ does not want to expend huge amounts of manpower on the mission. The aim of the Marines is to discover why no-one at the location is responding to communications, assist in any way they can and report back to headquarters. An appropriate Marine response will then be prepared, if one is required. ■

COMPLICATIONS

Throughout the campaign in this book, the PC Marines are merely pawns, kept in the dark. Sometimes their unit commanders know what's going on, but at other times they do not. Perhaps a civilian advisor could help them figure things out. You may want to use some of the following mission complications, which tie directly into the campaign backstory outlined in Chapter 9 of this book—The Frontier War.

TESTING, TESTING...: Sometimes, a black-ops bioweapons division will let something terrible loose on a world just to see what happens. A corporation might be responsible.

EMBEDDED AGENT: Occasionally advisors attached to the platoon and accompanying it into battle are actually cabal agents using the Marines to protect them as they uncover data or retrieve biological materials.

BLACK OPS COMMANDOS: This is an independent unit that will act in opposition to the Marines' squad. It may be a corporate team, a covert USCMC squad with an opposing agenda, or they may be Deep Void (page 199). Such black operations may include Berserker troops (page 166).

DEFECTOR: The PCs' squad may have to protect or rescue a political defector from the UPP who is actually a courier delivering data to a USCMC splinter group with its own agenda.

WHAT'S INSIDE ME? There are times when the Marines will need to rescue infected or impregnated victims of the xenomorphs (but of course they don't yet know about the imminent Chestburster, or the biological time bomb ticking down to release some black goo terror).

HEADHUNTING: It may be that a "rescue" mission handed to the Marines is actually an abduction mission, perhaps snatching a team of enemy scientists under the guise of protecting them.

IT'S CHRISTMAS! When the stakes are high, Marines might be sent on a race against the UPP to explore a derelict engineer ship and find the bio-samples and high-tech toys that the scientists crave. Scientific and archaeological advisors attached to the unit might be horrified to learn the Marines have been ordered to destroy the site before they leave.

DOWNTIME

After a mission has ended, the squad will return to its base to recover and relax, with the PCs blowing off steam, socializing and finding some way to entertain themselves. With Fort Nebraska destroyed, the 33rd MAU is homeless—its frigates and transports scattered and wandering the Frontier, each putting in at whatever UAAC base will have them between missions. For a list of USCMC bases near the Borderline Region, see page 154. This allows your PCs some say as to where to go next—with a gentle nudge from the Game Mother, of course.

You can take inspiration from a few random rolls in order to see what the PCs' unit got up to between missions—these events could either be roleplayed in detail or not, depending on what the players feel most comfortable with.

SQUAD DOWNTIME: Any PC not spending XP in this downtime between missions instead participates in a squad downtime event. Roll 2D6 on the table below.

PERSONAL DOWNTIME: A player character wishing to spend XP in order to improve a skill or talent spends their downtime studying, practicing and preparing, leaving little time for socializing with the other Marines. Roll a D6 on the table on the next page for a personal downtime event. ■

SQUAD DOWNTIME EVENTS

2D6	EVENT
2	An NPC from the platoon goes missing. Are they absent without leave (AWOL) or has something sinister happened to them?
3–4	Life on base is mind-numbingly boring—the squad must make its own entertainment, without breaking military regulations, or getting caught!
5	The squad become guinea pigs, training endlessly on new combat procedures, new kit or new prototype weapons. It's all experimental, hence the Weyland-Yutani scientist on hand.
6	There's a card game on and everyone's playing for real money.
7	The squad goes drinking. Trouble ensues!
8	Inspection—drill, cleaning, and more cleaning. All leave is canceled until the inspection ends. The company gunnery sergeant is on their case.
9	The squad must baby-sit a bunch of new recruits, keep them out of trouble and show them the ropes. With a senior officer visiting, the new guys must stay out of trouble.
10	The squad is restricted to barracks for an alleged infraction and it faces a disciplinary hearing. Can the PCs prove their innocence before then, or will they just make things worse?
11–12	The squad is given psych evaluations during a routine training exercise that focuses on team unity. As part of the experiment, each Marine is privately made to doubt the loyalty or motives or one other Marine.

PERSONAL DOWNTIME EVENTS

D6	EVENT
1	Training goes well.
2	There is a chance for the Marine to further their Personal Agenda.
3	The Marine has a romantic encounter on the base.
4	The Marine receives some bad news from home.
5	The Marine makes an enemy at the base.
6	Extra duties mean training is squeezed and the Marine has zero social life during this downtime.

DEALER'S CHOICE

There comes a time in every scenario or campaign where the Game Mother is going to have to make a choice. Sometimes, there are choices to add something into your campaign or not. Sometimes, at a critical moment, your players roll all Facehuggers—and sometimes the campaign would be enhanced if that alien queen sliced off that PC's leg instead of his head—giving him a chance to crawl over to the detonator and blow her sky high while the other PCs scramble away as fast as they can. This is ALIEN, and as Game Mother, you should be brutal—oh, so very brutal—but always rule for fun at the table and epicness in the ALIEN universe. In this book, a Game Mother option will be indicated with Peter Weyland's Covenant quote, "Dealer's Choice." As GM, it's your call as to what's best for your players and the game—so make sure you deal a good hand.

COMPANY CORNBREAD

Nothing brings a gaming table together like snacks—and nothing bonds a marine unit together like complaining about bad cornbread (except for a good knife trick or two). Here is a bland recipe to help add some flavor to your tasty game night. Just don't expect anyone to praise you for your culinary skills.

INGREDIENTS

450 ml. W-Y Colonial C-Ration Insta-carbohydrate supplement IM:14988
(2 cups Yellow Cornmeal or Cornflour)
10 ml. W-Y Colonial cooking supplement C
(2 tsp Baking powder or Bicarbonate of Soda, plus cream of tartar)
5 ml. W-Y Colonial cooking supplement D
(1 tsp. Baking soda or Bicarbonate of Soda)
15 ml. W-Y Colonial dietary supplement CHEBI:26710
(1 tsp. Salt)
5ml. Colonial Dehydrated egg supplement EL:67299 or 1 Large Bionational G3ngineered chicken egg
(1 Tbsp. equal parts dehydrated eggs and water or one large egg, beaten slightly)
250 ml. W-Y Colonial fermented non-dairy protein supplement BM:64755
(1 cup Buttermilk)
60 ml. Bionational hydrogenated bio-soy cooking solvent SO:00016
(1/4 cup cooking oil or melted butter)

The following recipe adheres to minimal dietary standards approved by the W-Y department of health and human services.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. **Combine the first four ingredients in a large bowl, mix well.**
2. **Add in the remaining ingredients.**
3. **Stir just until dry ingredients are moistened. Do not beat.**
4. **Pour into a well-greased 20x20x4 cm or 8x8x1 1/2-inch square baking pan dusted with W-Y Colonial Insta-carbohydrate supplement IM:14988 (corn meal). Bake in a hot oven (220 C./ Gas 7/ 425F.) for 20 minutes or until the top is a light golden brown. Makes roughly 16 servings, 5 cm or 2 inches square each.**

"What would you like me to play?"
"Dealer's choice."

—DAVID 8 AND SIR PETER WEYLAND

"What's this crap supposed to be?"
"Cornbread I think."
"Eat it, boy, it's good for you."

—PRIVATES DANIEL SPUNKMEYER AND RICCO FROST WITH LANCE CORPORAL DWAYNE HICKS

SYSTEMS & BASES

"Is this gonna be a standup fight, sir, or another bug hunt?"
"All we know is that there's still no contact with the colony and that a xenomorph may be involved."
"It's a bug hunt."

—PRIVATE WILLIAM HUDSON, LT. SCOTT GORMAN, AND CORPORAL DWAYNE HICKS

TERRITORY	SECTOR	SYSTEM	PLANETARY/MOON COLONIES
Outer Veil	American Advance	70 Ophiuchi System	70 Ophiuchi A V: Georgia 525 Colony, USCMC Chinook 91 Station
		KOI 571 System	KOI 571.02: Corinth Colony, Norcomm Ouragan Test Facility
		Kruger 60 System	Ariarcus: USCMC Fort Nebraska
Outer Rim Territories	Tartarus Sector	Ross 619 System	LV-2412: Skyfire Down Correctional Facility, ORDF Shipyards
		GL408 System	Delphís B: Liberty Echo ORDF Naval Base
	Crestus Prime Cluster	Alpha Boötis System	Arcturus: Mesa Canyon Trading Post, USCMC Station
		Mu Herculis A System	Bernice 378: USCMC Tithonus Mountain USAF Aerospace Force Base
	Crestus Garrison Systems	Garrison System Prime	Crestus Prime: Safe Haven Colony, UAAC Lamont Station Prime
		Garrison System Alpha	Planet Chibi: USCMC Snowball Moon, USCMC Moon 3326, USASF Lamont Station Alpha Comet Q3 Planetoid AV0043
		Garrison System Beta	Mourão Belt: LACN Shipyards, CCAF Lamont Station Beta
		Garrison System Gamma	UAAC Black Project Satellite Stations, Innominata Station, Todlab XLI
		Garrison System Delta	ORDF Lamont Station Delta, Inactive Starship Maintenance Yards
		Garrison System Upsilon	Classified
Frontier	Borderline Region	GJ1230AB System	Sahara: Grandhi Domes Freeport and Moon Colony, Sonderdatch Mine
		NN4274 System	O'Bannon's World: Last Chance Settlement
		GJ2005 System	Transept: Hyperdyne Service Outpost
		GJ1256 System	Alto VII: Stratus Waystation
		GL849 System	Pandora: Anesidora Colony
Beyond the 20 Parsec Limit		78 Nu Ceti System	Myssa 340: USCMC Tanburro Station

The UAAC maintains several bases throughout so-called civilized space. The Colonial Marines even have bases in friendly—and unfriendly—foreign territories. Bases are maintained throughout the American Arm, within the Anglo-Japanese Arm, and at least one is known to exist in UPP territory.

This chapter describes a number of systems, planets and bases, for use in a Colonial Marines campaign. They follow the same format as the ones in Chapter 10 of the core rulebook. They are all marked on the star map on the inside covers of this book, as well as on the large separate star map included in the ALIEN RPG Starter Set. ■

OTHER BASES

This chapter only includes a selection of military bases in charted space. All the conglomerate nations have known military bases spread throughout their areas. Some of these are included on the map on the inside covers of this book.

THE OUTER VEIL

A formerly rich expanse of stars, most of the Veil is tapped out, over-mined, and overrated. The Three World Empire and the UPP occupy most of this region, each maintaining control of the majority of the remaining prosperous colonies there. The UA regulates the American Corridor—a passage through the area to the Outer Rim—as well as a few key colonies in the Advance.

THE AMERICAN ADVANCE

Thrusting up from the American Corridor into UPP territory is the Advance—a vanguard of UA space gained during the Pang Ho Treaty. Until recently this resource-rich sector was protected by two major military installations—Fort Nebraska at Kruger 60 and Chinook 91 at 70 Ophiuchi A V. For decades, the Advance was unchallenged—until the Oil Wars.

In 2184 the UPP annexed the 61 Cygni system and attempted to do the same to Kruger 60—until the infamous border bombings left both systems dead (see the *Destroyer of Worlds* scenario, published separately). Several skirmishes between UA and UPP naval fleets have since occurred along the border, but no invasions of colonies on either side has occurred since the border bombings started.

MU/TH/UR SAID SO. Conspiracy theories abound about 61 Cygni—a glitch in the '83 navigation star charts update distributed to all current MU/TH/UR models showed 61 Cygni to have already been in Union space, several months before the UPP invaded that system. The fact that the same update had some stars duplicated and also misspelled "Weland" Yutani didn't stop the conspiracy from gaining traction, because people gossip. Remember, as all-knowing as she seems, MU/TH/UR is just a machine. She never lies—but she's only as good as her programmer. ■

70 OPHIUCHI SYSTEM

70 OPHIUCHI A V (GEORGIA 525 COLONY AND USCMC CHINOOK 91 STATION): Located on the fifth planet in the 70 Ophiuchi system, Georgia 525 Colony smells like someone left the gas on. Everywhere. This planet is a terraformed Mars-like colony of red sands, blue skies, natural gas wells, and surface refineries. In orbit around the planet is Chinook 91 Station—the headquarters of the sector's Marine Space Force.

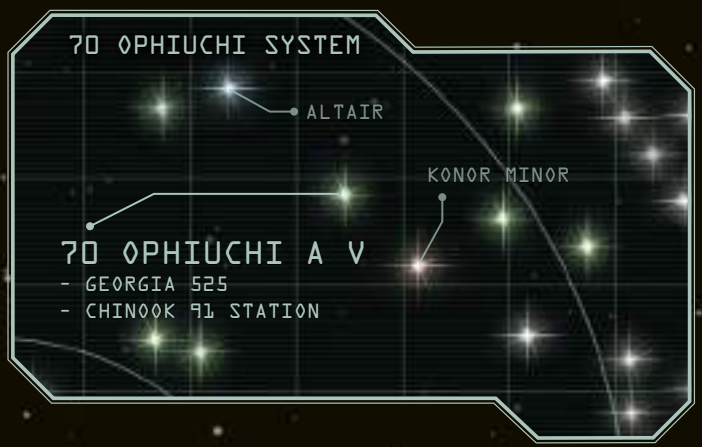
The colony itself is an open-domed community. There are no open flames (including smoking) and every colonist carries a light filter mask with them as heavy winds sometimes blow combustible gases into the area.

When the UPP began to annex systems in the Advance, colonial refugees flooded to Georgia 525. The colony's population has jumped from 125,000 to 500,000. After Fort Nebraska was lost at Kruger 60 (see *Destroyer of Worlds*), the decision was made by Colonial Administration to evacuate the entire sector. As the Latin American Colonial Navy lost the 6th Fleet in the Battle for 61 Cygni, the brunt of that work fell to the Colonial Marines.

Weyland-Yutani has sent a continent of passenger liners and freighters to help in the evacuation, and wealthy Georgians are offering good money to any corporate or civilian ship willing to transport them out of the sector—something that is causing a traffic nightmare in and out of the system.

70 OPHIUCHI A V
(GEORGIA 525 COLONY AND USCMC CHINOOK 91 STATION)

Location	**Outer Veil, the Advance, American Arm**
Affiliation	**United Americas, USCMC, Weyland-Yutani**
Classification	**Terrestrial planet, terraformed**
Climate	**Breathable atmosphere, blue skies**
Mean Temperature	**10°C**
Terrain	**Red deserts and shallow inland seas**
Colonies	**One (George 525 Colony) plus one orbital defense station (Chinook 91 Station)**
Population	**500,000 colonists and 5,000 marines on surface, 1,200 marines in orbit**
Key Resources	**Natural gas, military forces**



KRUGER 60 SYSTEM

The Kruger 60 system is not described here, as it is largely inaccessible to the PCs after the events in the *Destroyer of Worlds* scenario. Should your Marine campaign be set before those events, please refer to *Destroyer of Worlds* for more information about the system.

Some players, especially those who partook in the *Destroyer of Worlds* Cinematic Scenario, might want to have a look at Kruger 60 post Border Bombings. They've had better ideas—the system is ORDF blockaded with strict ICC quarantine protocols—anyone caught entering or leaving the system will be fired upon. Project Life Force, however, is sending covert CBRN teams in to retrieve samples. If they manage to get in, the planet Oblivion is surrounded with a ring of debris composed of UPP and USCMC wreckage. The colony on the icy moon of Ariarcus is an unstable radioactive crater swarming with Stage III and V Anathemas (page 180).

The USS *Aposteirono*—an android-crewed system frigate with a small human CBRN team—is pulverizing any sizable starship remains in order to kill whomever or whatever might have survived in them. Anyone setting foot on one of these ships or the moon's surface without protective gear will suffer the effects mentioned in the Black Bomb Effects on page 218.

KOI-571 SYSTEM

KOI 571.02 (CORINTH COLONY AND NORCOMM OURAGAN TESTING FACILITY): Corinth Colony sits on the UPP edge of the American Advance. The colony was built around production plants designed to meet the needs of the planetside Ouragan technology testing facility. A century ago—before the UPP existed—it produced storm rifles and synthetics for Weyland Corp.

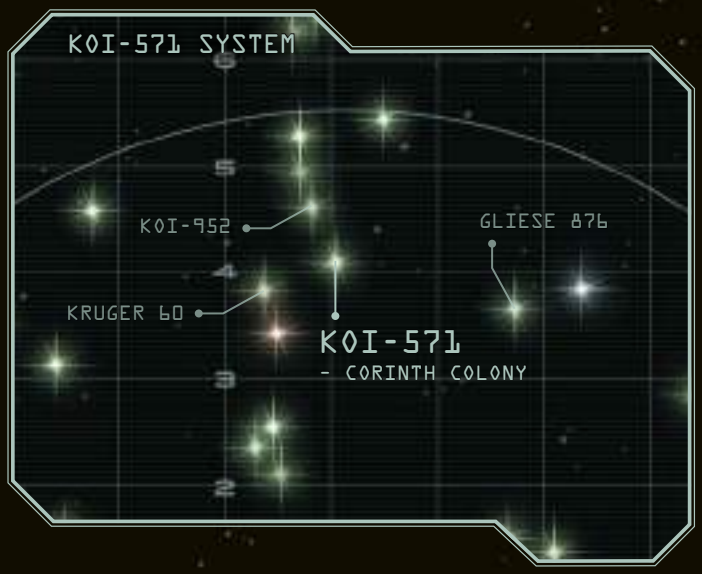
Over time, the facility's test rigs have fired particle weapons and plasma cannons as well as tested prototype fusion rockets and ion drives. While data on its population and resources remains classified to this day, it is believed that some 5,000 colonists live and toil at the Corinth Colony, producing the Norcomm technologies that the Ouragan Facility approves for the People.

At times, the Ouragan site has supported a crew of nearly three hundred personnel, including a small security contingent of Space Operating Forces. Most staff are engineers, scientists, and technicians, with a few military officers running the show. If needed, a caretaker staff of twenty can keep the facility running.

In 2183, Corinth Colony inventoried an old warehouse full of recalled and deactivated Weyland Corp. David 7 androids. Ouragan was converted into a Ministry of Space Security weapons testing facility. The androids were refurbished as combat synthetics and distributed throughout the People's Fleet (for more on Ouragan, see page 267). ■

KOI 571.02
(CORINTH COLONY AND NORCOMM OURAGAN TESTING FACILITY)

Location	**Outer Veil, the Advance, UPP Space**
Affiliation	**UPP, Ministry of Space Security, Norcomm**
Classification	**Terrestrial planet, terraformed**
Climate	**Breathable atmosphere**
Mean Temperature	**30°C**
Terrain	**Dusty savannas and brackish waterways**
Colonies	**One (Corinth Colony) plus one testing facility (Ouragan)**
Population	**Estimated 5,000**
Key Resources	**Production plants, security technologies and weapons testing**



THE OUTER RIM TERRITORIES

TARTARUS SECTOR

The location of the Torin Prime, Linna 349, Delorme, and Lebanon II conflicts, the rebellious Tartarus Sector has been a trouble hotspot for many decades, despite—or perhaps because of—the major military bases there.

ROSS 619 SYSTEM

LV-2412 (SKYFIRE DOWN CORRECTIONS FACILITY AND ORDF NAVAL SHIPYARD): Located just past the Frontier of the Tartarus Sector is the Weyland-Yutani/UAAC joint owned military prison world called Skyfire Down. If you go AWOL, strike a superior officer, or kill a civilian, chances are you'll wind up doing a stint of some kind on Skyfire Down.

The planet itself has been heavily strip-mined for construction materials by way of its prison workforce. Skyfire Down got its colorful name from the debris field of orbital junk that constantly burns up in the upper atmosphere like a dazzling meteorite shower. Sometimes, the debris is big enough to survive reentry—and some of those times, the ORDF orbital gunners neglect to shoot the pieces down. Many of those times, the inmate workforce is in the target zone.

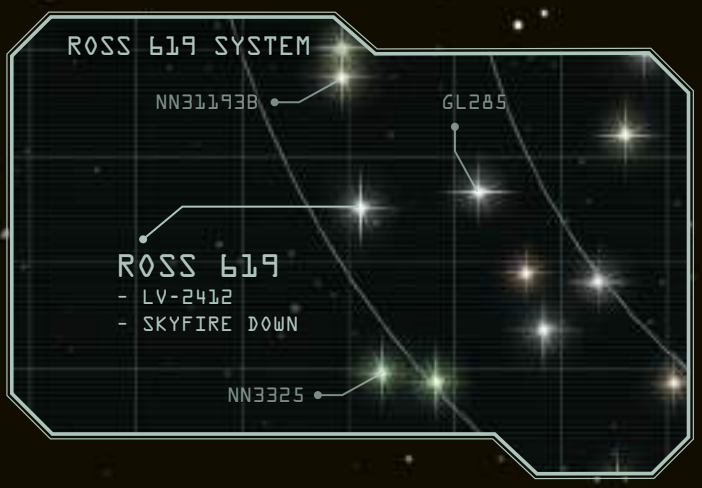
Working under W-Y subsidiaries like Lunnar-Welsun and Hyperdyne, conscripted prison laborers either mine the materials for starship construction on the surface or build fleet ships like the Conestogas and Valley Forge in planetary orbit. With the depletion of resources on Fiorina 161 in 2175 and the subsequent scaling down and eventual closing of the prison there, Weyland-Yutani expanded Skyfire Down's planetside facilities to take in civilian prisoners as well.

Work crews are often a civi/military mix. A garrison of Colonial Marines is stationed planetside to maintain order with the military inmates. As ships are finished, they are sent to Liberty Echo with a skeleton crew for their christening and assignment.

A NOTE FROM MU/TH/UR: If the PCs play too loose with military protocol, slap them with some time on Skyfire Down. ■

LV-2412
(SKYFIRE DOWN CORRECTIONS FACILITY AND ORDF NAVAL SHIPYARD)

Location	**Outer Rim Territories, Tartarus Sector, American Arm**
Affiliation	**United Americas, UAAC, ORDF, Lunnar-Welsun and Weyland Yutani**
Classification	**Terrestrial planet, terraformed**
Climate	**Breathable atmosphere, constant meteorite showers, 20-hour brisk nights, radiation zones.**
Mean Temperature	**8°C**
Terrain	**Gouged landscape, rocky with massive chasms and deep mines**
Colonies	**PLANETSIDE: UAAC Skyfire Down Military and Civilian Corrections Facility, USCMC garrison, and OCM station IN ORBIT: ORDF Naval Yards**
Population	**20,000 military inmates, 80,000 civilian inmates, 4,000 corporate admin and UAAC support personnel, 200 colonial marshals, 500 marines, and 15,000 fleet personnel and officers**
Key Resources	**Heavy metals, helium 3, rare earth metals, laborers, military forces**



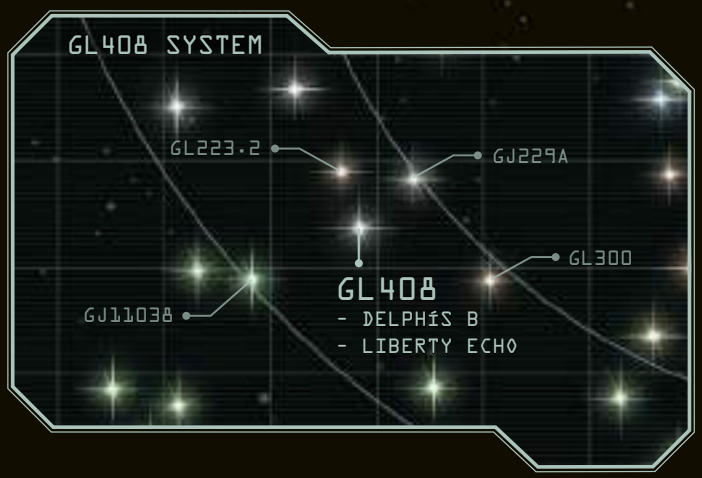
GL408 SYSTEM

DELPHÍS B (LIBERTY ECHO ORDF NAVAL BASE): Positioned on the rimward/trailward edge of the Outer Rim, Liberty Echo is located on the third moon of the blue gas giant Delphís. Echo is dedicated to protecting both the Tartarus sector and the Far Reach from enemy incursions and natural disasters. At least six Conestoga frigates with fast response teams are ready to launch from Liberty Echo at any time. Originally a booster array for Tanburro Station and a listening post for deep space transmissions—be they enemy or alien—Liberty Echo is the only remaining ORDF staging base outside of the Crestus Cluster.

DELPHÍS B
(LIBERTY ECHO ORDF NAVAL BASE)

Location	**Outer Rim Territories, Tartarus Sector, American Arm**
Affiliation	**United Americas, ORDF**
Classification	**Small terraformed terrestrial moon, orbiting a Jovian giant (Delphís)**
Climate	**Breathable atmosphere, dry and cold.**
Mean Temperature	**–2°C**
Terrain	**Dust and craters**
Colonies	**Military base**
Population	**50,000 fleet officers and crew**
Key Resources	**military forces, starship fleet**

A NOTE FROM MU/TH/UR: Liberty Echo's location puts it at least two weeks from the nearest Far Reach colony. While the Alpha Caeli colonial marine garrison in the Solomons (page 267 in the core rulebook) can respond to most colonial emergencies there with greater speed, both it and Liberty Echo are a month out from Tanaka's star at the tip of the Reach. The UAAC is looking to establish a military base on Tanaka 5 to increase response time to those furthest away, but until then, the colonies there are pretty much on their own. ■



THE CRESTUS PRIME CLUSTER

The spinward-most tip of the United American colonies, the Crestus Cluster used to be part of the Chinese Arm. Today, the Cluster is a highly militarized UA sector with many factory and production colonies as well as small mining and farming colonies. Because of the controversy over the UA acquisition of the territory by force, it's sometimes referred to as "American's Backhand" or the "Crestus Clusterfuck."

ALPHA BOÖTIS SYSTEM

ARCTURUS "ARCTURA" (GRAND KIVAS, W-Y FARM SETTLEMENT AND MESA CANYON TRADING POST): Alpha Boötis is a massive orange giant star on the edge of Borodino Sector and the Crestus Cluster. A single small earth-like world orbits here—a tilting planet alternatively called Arctura or Arcturus. A collision with an iron-heavy planetoid millennia ago knocked Arctura's axial tilt 98 degrees from its orbital plane, creating a peculiar seasonal pattern—each hemisphere spends fifty years in the blistering sun before being plunged into frozen darkness for the next fifty. The planet's equatorial region is its only habitable zone—a glittering twilight plain of mesas and placid lakes called the Guardian Belt.

Arctura is the site of humanity's first recorded contact with an intelligent extrasolar lifeform—the Arcturians—a sentient extrasolar species that somehow shares 99.99961% of their DNA with humanity (see the boxed text on page 145).

The Arcturian people live in warrens carved into the sides of mesas. They have built a number of stepped temples for stellar calculations, sprawling aqueducts, and the Grand Kivas—a single massive community square. The Arcturians gather here to greet star travelers visiting their world. Weyland-Yutani maintains a nearby mushroom farm settlement and Trading Post called Mesa Canyon. Here, visiting merchants can barter with friendly Arcturians for art, science, and medicine. A small contingent of Colonial Marines protects them from hostile indigenous lifeforms.

In the late 2150s, Arctura became the focus of a brutal war between the UA and the CANC that destroyed many of their cultural artifacts. Arcturian society has never recovered. Their population is said to be around 250,000—although this estimate is likely on the low side, as most post-war Arcturians shun contact with off-worlders. While the majority of Arcturians are friendly, some groups will kill off-worlders on sight. The warrens near Mesa Canyon are considered safe, but armed war parties are sometimes encountered in the wild.

ARCTURUS
(GRAND KIVAS, W-Y FARM SETTLEMENT AND MESA CANYON TRADING POST)

Location	**Border of the Crestus Prime Cluster and Borodino Sector, American Arm (former Chinese Arm)**
Affiliation	**United Americas Protectorate, Weyland-Yutani, and USCMC**
Classification	**Terrestrial planet**
Climate	**Breathable atmosphere, auroras, clear starry skies and near-perpetual twilight.**
Mean Temperature	**11°C**
Terrain	**Mesas, lakes, canyons, and plains**
Colonies	**Grand Kivas (Arcturians) W-Y farm and trading post, small USCMC station. Abandoned CANC Xian Po garrison and Li Huan comfort station**
Population	**250,000+ Arcturians, 2,000 corporate admin and farmers, 50 marines**
Key Resources	**Iron, heavy metals, fungiculture, pharmaceuticals, astronomical sciences**

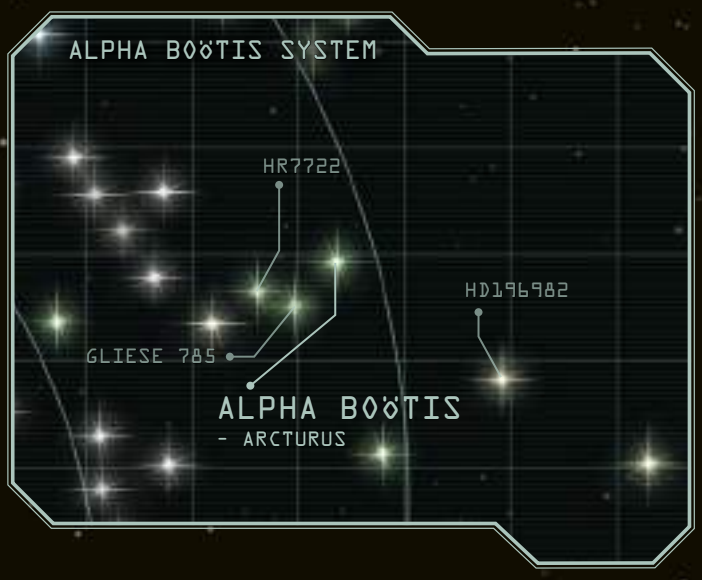
FIRST CONTACT

For decades, Arcturus was passed over for exploitation—probes sent into the system had cataloged the planet's extreme conditions and decided it wouldn't be worth the effort. In 2124, a Weyland-Yutani geological survey entered the system to evaluate the possibility of mining Arcturus' iron-heavy northern hemisphere during the late summer/early winter months. Making an equatorial pass, they were shocked to see huge kilometer long phosphorus drawings scrawled across the surface plains—clearly created by intelligent life.

As they descended to the Guardian Belt, the survey team was greeted by crowds of Arcturians gathering in the communal square and bearing gifts—the Arcturians had mistaken the survey ship for the return of their Star Teachers—mythical giants who taught them science and guided their culture. After clearing things up, the survey team discovered the Arcturians shared so much of our DNA that they could only be described as humanity's lost relatives amongst the stars.

The W-Y Board of Directors recognized the advanced mathematics, medicines, and art the Arcturians offered. Determining that public knowledge of their existence would benefit the company more than exploiting them in secret, Weyland-Yutani nonetheless established exclusive trade with the Arcturians before announcing their existence to the ICC and releasing their findings to the scientific community.

Scientists from any corporation are allowed to visit Arcturus for research, but only with the direct permission of the W-Y Board of Directors. W-Y claims this exclusivity is to protect the Arcturians from exploitation, but it is more likely meant to protect them from exploitation by anyone other than Weyland-Yutani.



"People are stupid. You tell them we found alien life and they brush it off as another worm or a microbe. You tell them it's intelligent life and they think it's a poodle-sized cockroach you can get to do tricks. You mention Arcturians and the ignorant think you are talking about extraterrestrial apes. Those are the Arctura. The Arcturians are smart people like us from another world—they just don't have our tech level. The difference between the Arcturians and Arctura is like the difference between us and a blue space monkey with a horn on its head."

—OVERHEARD IN A SPACEPORT BAR ON CORONADO COLONY

ARCTURIAN DOMINANT LIFEFORMS

The Guardian Belt is a fertile environment rich with unique lifeforms. While those at the top of the food chain are listed here, you can find more Arcturian fauna and flora in Chapter 10.

ARCTURIANS

The Arcturians are aliens that are also us. While the prevailing theory is that they were somehow once human, it's entirely possible that humanity was once Arcturian—or that someone else—the so-called Star Teachers, perhaps—made us both. Some scientists have suggested a connection to the century old Engineer theories of Drs. Elizabeth Shaw and Charles Holloway, but as most of their research went missing upon Sir Peter Weyland's death, no official paper has ever been published on the topic.

A BEAUTIFUL PEOPLE: Although the aboriginal Arcturian people are near human, they differ slightly in appearance—exhibiting pale, nearly translucent skin, graceful limbs, small noses, dark straight hair, and large, soulful eyes. They are of stunning grace and beauty. They wear stitched fabrics and animal hides and use natural charcoal and phosphorus chalks to draw intricate patterns on their bodies.

SOCIETAL ROLES: Arcturians are gender fluid, assuming male or female identities and roles as the communal needs of their society shift. While most of the Arcturians are artisans, there are warren hunter-protectors called simply guardians. Arcturian Guardians wear woven fiber armor made from layered thick reeds. Their weapons of choice are carved bone knives with intricate carvings and a handheld javelin-hurling lever called an atlatl. Those with more modern sensibilities arm themselves with a DV-303 Bolt Gun—a tool that they learned to use against the CANC invasion in 2158. They have readily taken to human firearms as well.

While they are more than capable of waging war, the Arcturians prefer to settle conflicts peacefully. Some have embraced human technologies, taking roughneck jobs on the W-Y farm and trading post. Many more have learned to speak both English and Chinese. They are a thoughtful, introspective people who do not tolerate theft or vandalization of their Star Teacher artifacts and architecture. Arcturians won't leave their world—they are waiting for the Star Teachers to return.

A SUPERIOR CULTURE: While not technologically affluent, the nearly-human Arcturians are nonetheless advanced. Their society and technological level can be likened to that of the Mesoamerican civilization developed by the Maya peoples. Arcturians live in tribal groupings they call warrens—a word they also use to describe their mesa-carved homes. Their architecture is similar to both that of the Maya and the ancient Pueblo peoples.

Arcturians have a highly developed writing system and are known for their art, fungiculture, natural pharmaceuticals, complex mathematics, theoretical quantum physics, and their astronomical system. Contact and trade with the Arcturians led Weyland-Yutani to develop new medicinal and FTL technologies based on their fungiculture, astronomical equations, and metaphysical theories.

ARCTURIANS

NPC	STR	AGL	WIT	EMP	HEALTH	SKILLS	TALENTS	GEAR
Typical Arcturian Guardian	3	5	3	3	3	Close Combat 2, Ranged Combat 3, Observation 2, Mobility 2, Survival 1	Flyweight	Knife, fabric armor (Rating 2), atlatl (MEDIUM range, base Damage 1), or kevlar vest and AK-4047 (old CANC stock).
Typical Arcturian Artisan	2	4	4	4	2	Mobility 2, Observation 4, Survival 2, Manipulation 2	Inquisitive	Knife, medkit, assorted mushrooms (deliver Sweet Dreams, X-Stim, and Neversleep effects), pocket survival kit.
Typical Arcturian Roughneck	3	4	4	3	3	Heavy Machinery 3, Mobility 2, Comtech 1, Observation 3, Survival 1	Resilient	Multitool, mechanical cutting tool, DV-303 Bolt Gun, edible mushrooms.

ARCTURIAN DOMINANT LIFEFORMS

THE ARCTURA

Many people find it hard to grasp that there's intelligent life out there other than our own—often confusing the Arcturians with the ape-like Arctura. Subterranean dwelling anthropoids with intelligence similar to that of lower apes, the Arctura have no trace of either Arcturian or human lineage in their DNA—they have evolved on their own. As male Arctura outnumber the females, a brood of 2D6 males will cater to a single female "den mother," protecting and caring for her and the young she produces.

PHYSICAL ATTRIBUTES: Bipedal and simian in statue, these albino mammals are egg layers like the platypus. Millenia of living in tunnels and caves has caused the Arctura's eyes to atrophy like those of a cave fish, leaving speculative scientists to suggest that they were once a surface-dwelling species and the collision that caused the axial tilt drove them underground. Instead of sight, they use a form of echolocation to navigate their surroundings.

CONTAINMENT AND TERMINATION PROTOCOLS: Since the Arctura bounce sound around to avoid stumbling in the dark, they don't take kindly to certain decibels. Sometimes even a comm uplink can get them in a tizzy. When you're in their tunnels, sound barriers and SHARP sticks are your friend. They will run when confronted with sonic deterrents tuned to the right frequency—you just need to find the right frequency for each group of them (COMTECH roll). Arctura hunt in packs, often attacking lone travelers. They are carnivorous and must be kept away from settlements. Thing is—they ain't just dumb animals. The Arctura have started using stone weapons and tools, indicating they are more intelligent than believed.

"ARCTURA"

SPEED: 2

SKILLS: Mobility 4, Observation 2

HEALTH: 6

ARMOR RATING: 0

ARCTURA ATTACKS

D6	ATTACK
1.	**ECHOLOCATION:** The blind Arctura rotates its head completely around like an owl and hoots, taking in its surroundings with a 360-degree sonar pulse. Add one to the next roll on this table (for a maximum of 6). All PCs at up to LONG range can feel a vibration in their chest and gain +1 STRESS LEVEL.
2.	**ULTRASONIC CHALLENGE:** The intimidating ape-like Arctura thumps its chest and whoops loudly, blasting everyone within SHORT range with an ultrasonic burst. Everyone must make a STAMINA roll (no action) or be stunned and lose their next action. +1 STRESS LEVEL.
3.	**PUMMEL ATTACK:** The Arctura leaps onto its victim. Roll for the attack using six Base Dice, Damage 1. If the attack hits, the victim is knocked to the ground, drops any hand-held items, and must make an immediate Panic Roll. The Arctura then starts pummeling the victim's chest with its powerful fists. This is resolved as an immediate bonus attack with six Base Dice, Damage 2.
4.	**NOT THE FACE:** The Arctura grabs the victim's face and attempts to tear their nose and skin from it. Roll for the attack using six Base Dice, Damage 1. If the attack causes damage, the victim must make an immediate Panic Roll and automatically suffers critical injury #31 (even if the victim is not Broken).
5.	**REND YOU LIMB FROM LIMB:** The Arctura grabs hold of one of the PC's limbs and tries to pull it from its socket. Roll for the attack using five Base Dice, Damage 1. If the attack causes damage, it automatically triggers critical injury #54 (even if the victim is not Broken), triggering an immediate Panic Roll.
6.	**SAVAGE BITE:** The Arctura bares its fangs and goes for the victim's jugular. Roll for the attack using six Base Dice, Damage 1. If the attack causes damage, it automatically inflicts critical injury #61 (even if the victim is not Broken), triggering an immediate Panic Roll.

THE ARCTURUS LOOP

The interstellar link between the ICSC and the Coreward Frontier, the Arcturus Loop is a circuitous route that arcs through the Alpha Boötis system to bypass ICC Customs in the Borodino Sector and the Crestus Cluster. There is a great deal of illegal traffic, mostly due to corruption at the corporate level—most smuggling runs here are company sanctioned.

Started in the 2130s to smuggle people and goods out of the CANC, the route itself is constantly shifting to counter new ICC and Colonial Marshal patrols. Anyone planning on using the Loop for black market runs had best lay hands on the latest BCM navigation charts and hope their FTL is fast enough to get there before the routes change again.

MU HERCULIS A SYSTEM

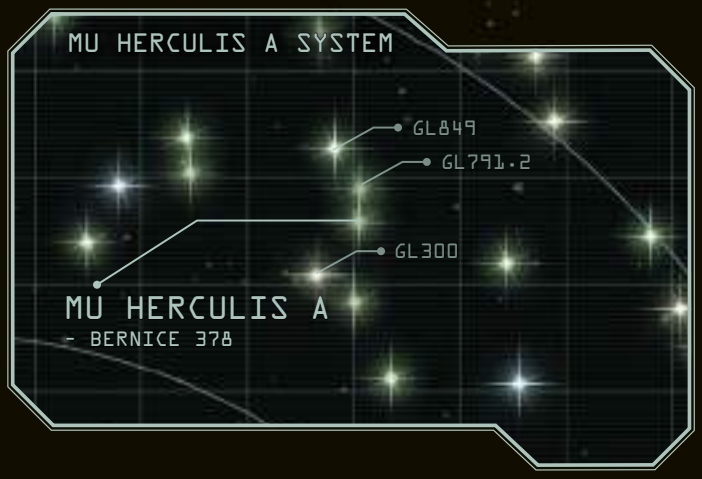
BERNICE 378 (TITHONUS MOUNTAIN UNITED STATES AEROSPACE BASE): Bernice 378 is the third planet in orbit around Mu Herculis A. Other than algae and microbes, the planet is lifeless. While the air is breathable, the planet is far enough away from its star that it is an arid tundra at the equator. The terrain there is mostly flatlands and valleys, but with one enormous mountain dominating the landscape.

It's here that the USCMC set up a full-service base within an extensive, pre-existing tunnel network—presumably lava tubes—that spirals through Tithonus Mountain. Sprawling caverns at the base of the mountain make perfect hangar bays for aerospace fighters, and there are large antechambers inside for armories, barracks, tactical centers, and more. The base is home to the 1st Colonial Support Group. Normally, three Conestoga Assault Frigates will be on station, parked on the tarmac at Tithonus.

Naturally composed of heavy metals, Tithonus is a fortified location—the base can take a nuke or two and would probably still be standing. While it never went that far, the base did see a lot of action when UPP ground forces tried to take the planet over during the Battle of the Red Line.

BERNICE 378
(TITHONUS MOUNTAIN UNITED STATES AEROSPACE BASE)

Location	**Crestus Prime Cluster, Edge of the Borderline Region, American Arm**
Affiliation	**USCMC, USASF, United Americas**
Classification	**Terrestrial planet**
Climate	**Breathable atmosphere, high winds**
Mean Temperature	**15°C**
Terrain	**Flatlands and valleys with a single mountain**
Colonies	**Tithonus Mountain USCMC and USASF military base**
Population	**3,000 marines**
Key Resources	**Heavy metals, Yttrium, military forces**



A NOTE FROM MU/TH/UR: At the top of Tithonus there is a huge, weathered lump of rock. Part of the original rock formation, the stones have eroded in such a way that at dusk each day they cast shadows that make the damn thing look like a massive skull. Some marines just don't see it—others it gives the heebie-jeebies to. It's just a trick of the light, of course—like the face people used to think they saw on Mars. When you get up real close, you can see it's a pile of rocks. It really is just rocks. It totally is. ■

THE CRESTUS GARRISON SYSTEMS

After the UPP standoff on the Red Line in '63, the UAAC decided to secure the former Chinese Arm. They chose six uninhabited star systems within the dense stars of the Crestus Cluster, moved in specialized personnel and their families, and transformed the Cluster into the most heavily fortified sector of space. Dubbed Project Twinklestar, construction of these Garrison Systems took the better part of a decade.

All but one of these fortified systems contain no habitable planets—only massive Lamont class military service stations orbiting the major planet of each system. Configured similar to Gateway Station, these Lamonts have huge external docking areas for cruisers, freighters, and frigates. They contain barracks for thousands of soldiers, marines, pilots, or fleet personnel. There are also top-secret military and scientific facilities. Weapons tests, unusual research, and advanced training happens here. Frequent frigate patrols and sensor buoy detection grids keep the systems secure. From the Garrison Systems, UAAC military forces can quickly reach any of the colonies along the UPP Frontier.

A NOTE FROM MU/TH/UR: The Garrison Worlds have never had to deal with a security breach. As such, while security is tight, anyone who enters the detection grid without suspicious behavior will only be asked to show clearance codes and answer simple questions once every 24 hours. As long as the codes are good and the answers are reasonable, the patrol will tag your ship with a friendly IFF transmitter and allow you to proceed. For the same reason, anyone encountered inside the perimeter of these systems is assumed to be allowed there. ■

GARRISON SYSTEM PRIME

CRESTUS PRIME (SAFE HAVEN COLONY AND UAAC LAMONT STATION PRIME): Established after the Dog War in the dense nebulae of the Crestus Prime Cluster, Garrison Prime is the hub of the UAAC space defense network. The exact coordinates of the system are known only to top level military personnel of the UAAC and are only placed in the navigation computers of ships assigned specifically to the system. Any visiting vessel has a UAAC navigation protocol installed that gets the ship to the system and then completely dumps its nav charts, requiring a complete install just to leave.

Prime is the only Garrison System to support a planetside colony. A primordial world, Prime sports five atmospheric processors around Safe Haven Colony—a single large settlement of 30,000 UAAC officers, support personnel, and their families—all of which live and work within the Cluster. About sixty kilometers outside the colony, the atmosphere turns toxic. It's only been twenty years since the processors were installed and the planet has a long way to go for a complete terraform.

CRESTUS PRIME

(SAFE HAVEN COLONY AND UAAC LAMONT STATION PRIME)

Location	**Crestus Prime Cluster, American Arm**
Affiliation	**UAAC, USCMC, USASF, LACN, CCAF, ORDF, United Americas**
Classification	**Terrestrial planet**
Climate	**Warm, breathable atmosphere within 60km of the colony, after that toxic and cold.**
Mean Temperature	**22°C in the terraformed zone, –10°C outside**
Terrain	**Partially terraformed valley**
Colonies	**Safe Haven Colony planetside plus Lamont Station Prime in orbit.**
Population	**30,000 military personnel and families 1,200 on the orbital station**
Key Resources	**Unregistered**

GARRISON SYSTEM ALPHA

COMET Q3, PLANETOID AV0043, AND PLANET CHIBI (THE SNOWBALL MOON, MOON 3326, LAMONT STATION ALPHA): The USCMC and Aerospace Force use the Alpha System for Advanced Hostile Environment training (AHE) most often offered to Chemical Biological Radiological and Nuclear units. The USCMC puts its elite personnel through the paces on the molten planetoid AV0043, on the icy comet Q3, and under the seas of Snowball—a moon with subsurface oceans.

The Aerospace Force also provides Accelerated Pilot (AP) training that includes navigating through storms on the gas giant Planet Chibi. The moons of that gas giant have various toxic atmospheres, and one is regularly nuked before sending the CBRN marines in. The outpost on Moon 3326 was recently destroyed after several weapons tests went awry (see Project Berserker on page 166).

Because of all this, Garrison System Alpha is colloquially referred to by its veterans as "System Shitstorm."

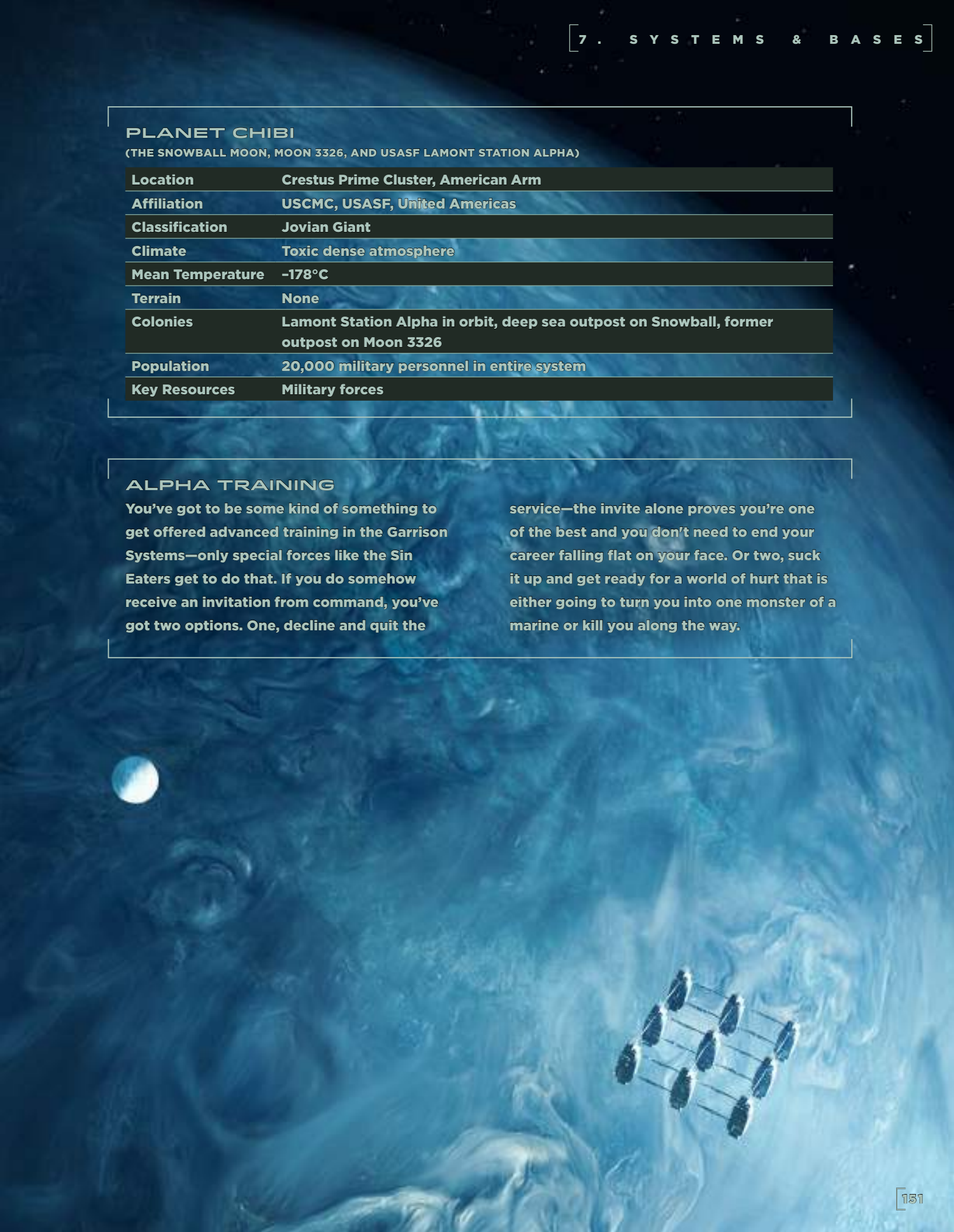
PLANET CHIBI

(THE SNOWBALL MOON, MOON 3326, AND USASF LAMONT STATION ALPHA)

Location	**Crestus Prime Cluster, American Arm**
Affiliation	**USCMC, USASF, United Americas**
Classification	**Jovian Giant**
Climate	**Toxic dense atmosphere**
Mean Temperature	**–178°C**
Terrain	**None**
Colonies	**Lamont Station Alpha in orbit, deep sea outpost on Snowball, former outpost on Moon 3326**
Population	**20,000 military personnel in entire system**
Key Resources	**Military forces**

ALPHA TRAINING

You've got to be some kind of something to get offered advanced training in the Garrison Systems—only special forces like the Sin Eaters get to do that. If you do somehow receive an invitation from command, you've got two options. One, decline and quit the service—the invite alone proves you're one of the best and you don't need to end your career falling flat on your face. Or two, suck it up and get ready for a world of hurt that is either going to turn you into one monster of a marine or kill you along the way.



GARRISON SYSTEM BETA

MOURÃO BELT (LACN SHIPYARDS AND CCAF LAMONT STATION BETA): A former CANC production and factory system, the Mourão Belt is now the headquarters for the Latin American Colonial Navy and the Canadian Colonial Armed Forces. Civilian contractors are brought to the system's extensive Naval shipyards to work for two-year periods before being rotated out. Harvester ships pursue heavy metal asteroids within the system, collecting them and processing them into ore for starship construction. The Canadian Armed Forces headquarters is built into a moon-sized honeycombed asteroid that orbits Beta's star.

MOURÃO BELT
(LACN SHIPYARDS AND CCAF LAMONT STATION BETA)

Location	**Crestus Prime Cluster, American Arm**
Affiliation	**LACN, CCAF, United Americas**
Classification	**Asteroid Belt**
Climate	**Toxic dense atmosphere**
Mean Temperature	**20°C (controlled station climate)**
Terrain	**None**
Colonies	**Lamont Station Beta, Mourão Shipyards**
Population	**30,000 military personnel in system**
Key Resources	**Heavy metals, titanium, iridium, rare earth metals, military forces**

GARRISON SYSTEM GAMMA

BLACK PROJECT STATIONS: Like Crestus Prime, System Gamma can only be reached with UAAC Navigation Protocols—and for good reason. Also called the Guinea Pig System, Gamma has no Lamont Station or discernible nerve center. Each of the military branches develop their black projects here—far from any colony and isolated within their own floating tin coffins. Military research stations like Innominata Station and Todlab XLI perform classified research with cleared civilian scientists and corporate advisors. Much of the research done here is beneficial to humanity. In fact, it was Todlab that developed the treatment for Arcturian Klerhaige. Other projects have darker intent.

Project Life Force, the Berserker program, and many others (see Chapter 8) were started at Gamma. System patrols here won't let anyone exit the system without both the proper codes and observation of 24-hour quarantine protocols. Anyone who does not comply will be destroyed.

GARRISON SYSTEM DELTA

ORDF LAMONT STATION DELTA (STARSHIP MAINTENANCE YARDS): Sometimes called the warships' graveyard, Delta system is where the Outer Rim Defense Fleet keeps its mothballed ships. Dreadnoughts, Conestogas, and even scrapped Heliades ships—over eighty years of warship designs are cataloged and stored here in stellar orbit.

The system's Lamont station is a refurbishing center for dismantling damaged ships and using their parts and weapons packages to refit others. USCMC Colonel Percival's Recon Battalion operates out of Delta, keeping an eye on the old fleet when not on assignment (page 228 in the core rulebook). Percival is loyal to the UAAC and covertly reports directly to the Secretary of Defense any suspicious behavior within the Corps.

A NOTE FROM MU/TH/UR: Of the hundreds of warships stockpiled at Delta, a good eighty percent of them are spaceworthy, FTL capable, and still armed. While many of the frigates and freighters here are left over from the Dog War, that doesn't make them any less dangerous. The ORDF has even been upgrading these ships at the behest of Secretary of Defense de la Cruz—a fact that General Vaughn (page 200) has not been made aware of. ■

GARRISON SYSTEM UPSILON

CLASSIFIED: Move along. This system is need-to-know only, and you do not need to know. ■

A NOTE FROM MU/TH/UR: Or do you? This black project site system is a blank slate for you as Game Mother to scribble on—an opportunity for you to create a massive military secret catered to your specific campaign. In truth, only you know what's hidden here. ■

THE FRONTIER

THE BORDERLINE REGION

An undeveloped Frontier region designated by the Pang Ho Treaty, the Borderline Region sits between the UPP, the Crestus Cluster and Borodino Sector of the American Arm. After the initial flare up in the American Advance, this region becomes entrenched in the Frontier War.

There is nothing in the desert...
...and no man needs nothing."

—DAVID 8 AFTER T.H. LAWRENCE

GJ1230AB SYSTEM

SAHARA (GRANDHI DOMES FREEPORT AND MOON COLONY, SONDERDATCH MINE): Located in a binary star system, Grandhi is an airless moon orbiting an enormous super-earth desert planet aptly called Sahara. On the moon is a large sulfate mine called Sonderdatch and the Grandhi Domes—a domed colony and service "freeport" open to any and all starships. The repair crews there can fix anything—just don't expect the fix to last more than a few months.

The Grandhi Domes' board of directors considers the moon neutral territory for everyone—even colonial marshals who track a criminal to the moon are unable to apprehend them until they leave. 15,000 free colonists live here—former CANC and UA citizens alike who wanted a new start free of government intervention.

The colony is mostly self-sufficient—mining and processing their own water and oxygen from the moon's minerals. Weyland-Yutani currently leases a very successful moonside sulfate mine from the Grandhi directors. Located some thirty-five klicks from the Domes, the site is called Sonderdatch Mine. Additionally, the desert planet Sahara is suspected of having vast untapped crude oil deposits—most likely the reason the ICSC has been courting Grandhi Domes for membership.

Anyone violating Grandhi law is subject to exile on Sahara, which might as well be execution. Rumors persist of survivors who have built their own tucked away colony there amongst the endless sand dunes (there is very little rocky surface on Sahara). Others claim the planet is haunted, and anyone landing there can expect to lose both their soul and their ship.

SAHARA

(GRANDHI DOMES FREEPORT AND MOON COLONY, SONDERDATCH MINE)

Location	**Frontier Borderline Region**
Affiliation	**Independent with W-Y and ICSC interests**
Classification	**Terrestrial planet with rocky moon**
Climate	**Planet—hot breathable atmosphere, arid, sand-storms. Moon—airless.**
Mean Temperature	**60° C (planet), -50° C (moonside)**
Terrain	**Planet is endless sandy dunes, moon is low gravity rock.**
Colonies	**Grandhi Domes Freeport and Sonderdatch Mine moon colony**
Population	**Planetside unknown, 1,500 colonists (moonside)**
Key Resources	**Crude oil (on Sahara), sulfite metals and service station (moonside).**

NN4374 SYSTEM

O'BANNON'S WORLD (LAST CHANCE SETTLEMENT): O'Bannon's World is a sweltering green jungle moon and the site of a small colony of former CANC citizens who decided to give up the fight and return to a simpler life. Their only contact with civilization is an occasional freighter that comes to trade medicines and supplies in return for shipments of prawn harvested from the swamps.

Part of the Battle of the Red Line was fought at O'Bannon's World, as a joint UA Colonial Marine and 3WE Royal Marine task force identified and repelled a CANC military contingent there. With the signing of the Pang Ho Treaty, refugees were allowed to settle the jungle moon, with the provision they give up all arms not necessary to the protection of the small Last Chance Settlement.

Life on O'Bannon's World is harsh—there's a lot of living things in that jungle, and flora or fauna, microbe or mosquito, it all wants you dead. All those life readings plus magnetic interference from the moon's poles make sensor readings dodgy at best here, so be prepared to do a surface side recon if you are looking for someone. In fact, the settlers have found a way to use that electromagnetic energy to power their generators. It's only a matter of time before the corporations send scientists to determine how to exploit it.

O'BANNON'S WORLD
(LAST CHANCE SETTLEMENT)

Location	**Frontier, Borderline Region**
Affiliation	**None**
Classification	**Terrestrial moon orbiting a Hot Jovian Giant (NN-4374 b)**
Climate	**Breathable atmosphere, hot and humid**
Mean Temperature	**40°C**
Terrain	**Jungle, swamps, rivers**
Colonies	**One, Last Chance Settlement**
Population	**111 colonists**
Key Resources	**Electromagnetic radiation, aquaculture**

A NOTE FROM MU/TH/UR: Keep off the grass on O'Bannon's World—the plants there are murderous and downright alien. ■

GHOST OF A CHANCE. Back in '63, at the tail end of the Dog War—we had the CANC on the run, hightailing it up what used to be the Chinese Arm and into the UPP.

We were garrisoned at Titonus Mountain back then—this is before Tinklebell or Tinkerstar or whatever they were calling the Crestus Cluster-fuck. I had just gotten my third stripe when they assigned me to a tough as nails Lieutenant named Chance O'Bannon—no bullshit. That's the name his mommy gave him—and was he one ornery son of a bitch. When O'Bannon was born, he kicked the doctor in the face for slapping him. Yes sir, they don't make lieutenants like O'Bannon no more—now they're all pish-posh inner colony officers who only got the commission because some company yahoo could tie strings around their arms and make them dance like a goddamn marionette. Damn company men, I tell you.

Anyway, the Battalion Commander called us Chance's Ghosts—the new unit O'Bannon assembled after his last batch flew their Conny into the CANC fleet over Arcturus and ignited her fusion drive. Alpha Boo got itself a second star for a moment—and the blast shut the door on that little scuffle real fast. O'Bannon's marines had been losing, so they blew themselves up to win. The Lt. and his second squad were planetside when

it went down, otherwise he'd have been kicking open the door to hell for them. That's how tough the sons-of-bitches were that we had to live up to—a man like O'Bannon deserved no less.

Anyways, the Co-Ops were supposed to be bugging out, so Tithonus sent frigate teams to make sure they actually left. Our job was to set up checkpoints to make sure none of the Co-Op's civis tried to colonize on their way trailward to the UPP. We drew the short stick and got NN-4374 b—just another hot Jupiter with a jungle moon and no hospitality station. Thing about this moon is it's got these funny poles—they put out this weird magnetic field that makes it real hard to pick up good readings for anything. The Lieutenant had a feeling about this hotspot on the equator, so we dead-dropped about 40 klicks west and headed down river.

I kept thinking it wasn't so bad for a jungle—at least the trees were green instead of them purple things on LK-176. That night we came across a six-man Co-Op patrol—O'Bannon ordered us to hold fire and sent a suppressed Pup after them to get a full layout of their LZ. The Pup scans showed it wasn't no refugee camp—it was a staging area for a CANC armored division. O'Bannon decided we would hit the place at second dawn, so we set up camp for the night about 10 klicks shy of target and bivouacked in the jungle canopy. I posted perimeter guards—by the book shit—to track the fauna for any predators who might try to creep their way in. We got predators, alright—just wasn't the fauna we needed to look out for.

I woke up at first dawn to hear screaming coming from the Lieutenant's tent. I figured we were under Co-Op attack, so I yelled at Jenkins to secure the perimeter and I tore through O'Bannon's tent flap with my combat knife. I didn't know what the fuck I was looking at.

There was some kind of scarecrow in the lieutenant's sleeping bag—vines and leaves and shit stuffed inside a uniform. I thought O'Bannon was pulling a prank or some shit, until the goddamn thing twitched. It was O'Bannon. He had woken up rooted to the ground with vines growing up his ass and out his eyeballs—damn things had taken over his circulatory system and were drinking his blood. Little green buds were popping out under his fingernails. He was part of the damn tree.

Worst part was that he woke up at all—toughest son of a bitch I ever knew and he just begged me to kill him on the spot. Grabbed my weapon and blew his own brains out when I called for a medic. Allied Command named the damn moon O'Bannon's World after him—I guess when you get taken out by vampire vines that you deserve at least that much. Point is, watch your step out there. Sometimes someone or something hiding in the trees is trying to kill you and sometimes it's the goddamn trees themselves. ■

—MASTER SERGEANT MICHAEL SCUDIERI, RETIRED.

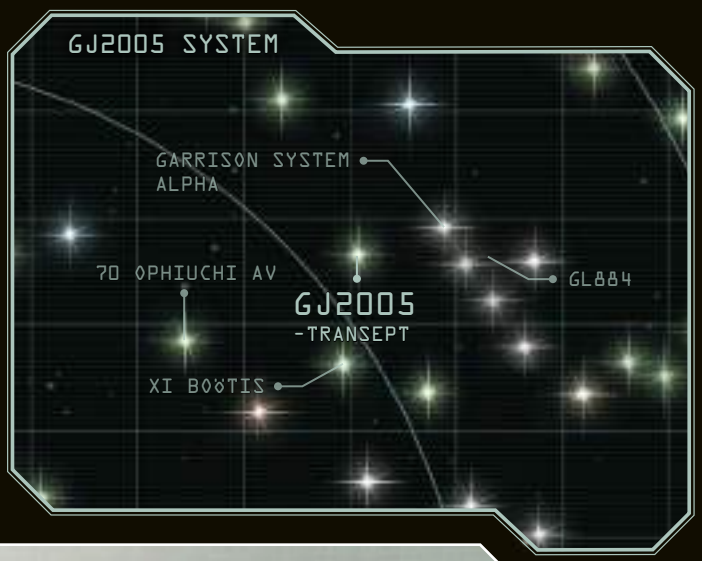
GJ2005 SYSTEM

TRANSEPT (HYPERDYNE AA23 STARSHIP AND SYNTHETIC SERVICE OUTPOST): A planet in circumbinary orbit around twin brown dwarf stars, Transept is a starship and synthetic service outpost completely crewed by Hyperdyne 120A-/2 and A/3 models. Only a small rest and recreation center here has full oxygen—and visitors are expected to stay there until their ships and androids are ready.

Kilometers-wide surface areas of this thin-atmosphere barren rock are covered in massive solar collector arrays. Hyperdyne has set up a remote expedition basecamp on Transept. At least six surplus vintage Heliades III class exploration vessels are being refurbished here by the outpost's synthetic labor force. While registered for spinward exploration, the ships are being used to chart potential smuggling routes to and from Anesidora in order to transport biotechnology developed there without fear of ICC consequences. The first ship—Epimetheus—and its all-android crew has already begun experimental mapping runs.

TRANSEPT
(HYPERDYNE AA23 STARSHIP AND SYNTHETIC SERVICE OUTPOST)

Location	**Frontier, Borderline Region**
Affiliation	**Hyperdyne**
Classification	**Terrestrial planet**
Climate	**Barely breathable thin atmosphere, solar winds**
Mean Temperature	**10°C**
Terrain	**Barren and rocky**
Colonies	**Expedition camp only**
Population	**63 synthetics**
Key Resources	**Solar power batteries, service station, supplies**



GJ1256 SYSTEM

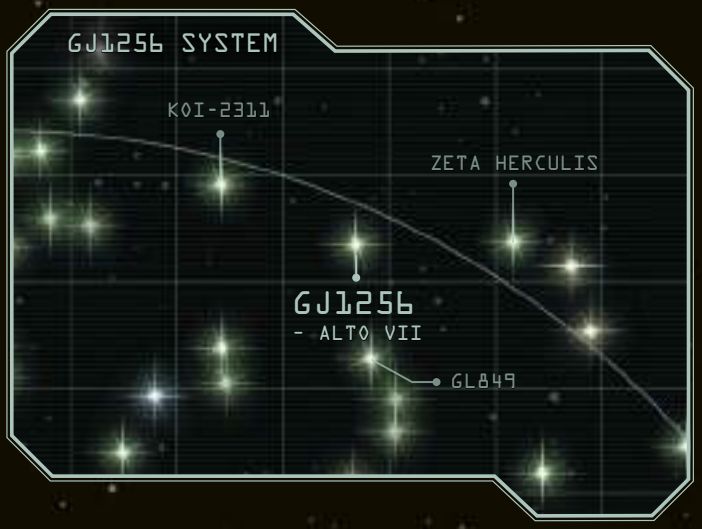
ALTO VII (STRATUS WAYSTATION): After the Dog War, the UAAC had the monumental task of shepherding the Cooperative Exodus into UPP space—a task they pawned off on the USCMC Herculis Space Force at Tithonus Mountain. To protect the Marines' flank, the Canadian Colonial Armed Forces set up Stratus as a temporary garrison system. By the end of '67, the base was cleared out as per treaty stipulations, but the large, abandoned ground military base and decaying deep space tracking station remain. Some even say there are vast stores of chemical and radiological weapons still there, all but forgotten. Parts of the system are even still covered in orbital mines. A small private way station and salvage operation there has started deactivating the system's remaining defenses and recovering the twenty-year-old equipment left over from the war.

WHERE IN HELL DID HYPERDYNE GET THOSE HELIADES?

Transept is located less than a parsec from the Garrison Systems—one of which is an ORDF graveyard of decommissioned starships. Whether Hyperdyne somehow stole those Weyland Corp. Heliades from Garrison Delta or worked out some kind of quiet deal with the ORDF is uncertain—but you can be damn sure they're not supposed to have them.

ALTO VII
(STRATUS WAYSTATION)

Location	**Borderline Region, Frontier**
Affiliation	**None, formerly CCAF**
Classification	**Terrestrial planet**
Climate	**Breathable atmosphere, constant cold rain and overcast skies**
Mean Temperature	**13°C**
Terrain	**Muddy steppes**
Colonies	**Former Garrison, now Stratus Waystation only**
Population	**40 transients**
Key Resources	**Salvage, military surplus**



GL849 SYSTEM

PANDORA (ANESIDORA COLONY): Identified as simply Pandora on some star maps, the lawless Anesidora Colony is located at the furthest edge of UA and ICC governed space. There are no police or colonial security here—on Anesidora, everyone is on their own. The local government is an ineffectual confederation of power grabbers rife with infighting. Mostly oceans with an archipelago of volcanic islands, the exotic planet is teeming with uncatalogued lifeforms.

Many former Cooperative citizens chose to settle here, and the inhabited areas are crowded with over four million colonists. Anesidora has garnered corporate interest of late—the Jīngtì Lóng Corporation is building floating artificial land masses that link the main islands of the archipelago together over the water, and Weyland-Yutani has set up biodiversity research laboratories on the more remote islands. Hyperdyne and several other corporations have begun sending expeditionary forces into unknown space beyond the colony—such exploration initiatives haven't been seen since the Weyland Era. ■

A NOTE FROM MU/TH/UR: Most colonists are here because they are out of options. Send a Marshal ID Pup to scan down any given alleyway on the main islands and you'll get positive identification on over a dozen thieves, public offenders, and felons. Go to the lesser islands and you'll find families just trying to live a simple life. Make it out far enough and you'll get war criminals that are supposed to be dead, unregistered mercenary camps, and shadow laboratories where illegal bioweapon research is being performed. In fact, Project Life Force operates a black site here on Darwin Island. ■

PANDORA
(ANESIDORA COLONY)

Location	**Borderline Region, Frontier**
Affiliation	**Jǐngtì Lóng Corporation, Hyperdyne Systems, Independent**
Classification	**Terrestrial planet**
Climate	**Breathable atmosphere, tropical weather, tsunamis**
Mean Temperature	**33°C**
Terrain	**Vast oceans, lava rock cliffs overlooking rainforest valleys and subtropical beaches on active volcanic island chains**
Colonies	**One, spread across the main archipelago on the islands Adagia, Pithos, Gwoemul, Kylix, Lóng, and Darwin**
Population	**4,000,000 colonists (main island chain), 250,000 transients (spread across the planet)**
Key Resources	**Komatiite, aquaculture, mariculture, exotic live exports, bio-research**

BEYOND THE 20 PARSEC LIMIT

Far past any civilized system, the darkness of space doesn't just stare back at you, it gets inside you and eats you from the inside out.

78 NU CETI SYSTEM

MYSSA 340 "MISERY" (USCMC TANBURRO STATION): If there is an ass end of space, this is it. One of the most remote marine garrisons, Tanburro Station is a cramped sixty-year-old orbital platform that was originally established as a monitoring station for possible communications with lost colony missions. The station is all antennae and dishes mated to an endless maze of maintenance ducts and machine rooms—all in a constant state of disrepair.

While it was built to accommodate two hundred marines, Tanburro personnel compliments over the years have ranged from fifty marines to only two. Personnel and resupply runs only come once every two years, and nothing more exciting than broken plumbing ever happens there—except, of course, for the times someone has lost their mind. For all these reasons and more, the station has earned the nickname Misery. A glorified listening station with nothing to listen to, the biggest enemy the marines stationed at Misery have had to face is Misery itself.

The station orbits the third planet in the system—Myssa 340, a small planetoid with a toxic atmosphere. During the Weyland Era, Myssa was considered a prime candidate for terraforming. An old-style Weyland atmospheric processor was installed in the 2080s but was abandoned when Weyland Corp stocks crashed ten years later. Any work the processor had done was undone. On the surface, the air itself is corrosive. The abandoned Weyland colony remains a scorched and pitted ghost town, crumbling in its own rusty filth. ■

MYSSA 340 "MISERY"
(USCMC TANBURRO STATION)

Location	**Rimward space, 23 parsecs from Sol**
Affiliation	**USCMC**
Classification	**Terrestrial planet**
Climate	**Thick toxic atmosphere, lightning storms**
Mean Temperature	**42°C**
Terrain	**Cooled lava fields, dormant volcanoes**
Colonies	**One, abandoned plus Tanburro Station in orbit**
Population	**None**
Key Resources	**Magnesium, iron, obsidian**

A NOTE FROM MU/TH/UR: Being sent to Misery is the 22nd century equivalent of being sent to Siberia. Cause too many problems with command and you can be sure you'll be finishing out your tour either here or on Skyfire Down. ■

BLACK PROJECTS

"Hey, mira, who's Snow White?"
"She's supposed to be some kinda consultant. Apparently, she saw an alien once."
"Whoopee-fuckin'-do. Hey, I'm impressed."

—PRIVATE JENETTE VASQUEZ WITH CORPORALS COLETTE FERRO AND WILLIAM HUDSON, 2ND BATTALION BRAVO TEAM

Every government has its secret projects—and every government is trying to find out what all those other projects are and beat their competitors to the punch. Such is the trappings of a cold war. While the USCMC has several weapons projects like the S.H.A.R.P. and Phased-Plasma Rifles in development, their programs listed here are of particular interest and may or may not have been sanctioned by the UAAC. ■

ARTIFICIAL WOMB SOLDIER PROGRAM

STATUS: CLOSED

Artificial Womb Soldiers are human troops that come from a military artificial womb—a program designed to supplant the draft and bolster the ranks of the USCMC in times of war. Due to the program's controversial nature, information about it is on a need-to-know basis.

CONCEPTION

After failing to pass a Colonial Draft Act in 2109, coupled with the loss of UAS Archangel and the rise of the UPP, the USCMC turned to Weyland-Yutani's Alternative Troop Solutions division. While combat synthetics like the Davis and Franklin models were considered, the UAAC trusted human troops more than machines. Weyland-Yutani scientists used gene therapy techniques to tweak the physical attributes of artificially inseminated embryos.

Grown in synthetic wombs, the would-be soldiers were then raised in a communal military environment that taught them everything they needed to know to win at war—and nothing else. In order to avoid any unintentional mix-up, an artificial womb soldier is always marked with the middle initials A.W. and has the surname of a weapon such as Sword, Arrow, or Hatchet.

DEPLOYMENT

AW soldiers were deployed during the Colony Wars, Arcturian Conflicts, and the Dog War—but due to some unfortunate incidents, they were recalled halfway through the Tientsin Campaign. Most recently, many AW Soldiers were lost during the Border Bombings. While the AWS Program was originally conceived at Redlake ASFB, the final crop was raised at Garrison System Beta after the program was discontinued.

OBSTACLES

The program isn't any real time saver—it still takes 18 years to create a viable soldier—which doesn't help when a crisis strikes, and the ranks need to be bolstered ASAP. AW Soldiers are also a detriment to morale—enlisted Marines don't appreciate the notion of being replaced by artificial means—be they synthetic or biological. AW soldiers have problems with interpersonal relationships. They weren't raised to get along—they were raised to follow orders and kill the enemy. In childhood, they are taught to take advantage of a rival's weaknesses. In many cases, this has produced psychopaths.

CONCLUSION

While less cost effective than standardized troops, the AWS Program produced lethal warriors who owned their battlefield. When deployed correctly and no civilians are involved, they are an incredible asset to any campaign. Notable AWS personnel include Major General Thomas Spears, Lt. Alexandra Gunn, Private Nathaniel Hammer (MIA), and Cadet Jericho Axe (deceased).

PLAYING AN AW SOLDIER

With your consent, players can create AW soldier PCs. These are created as Colonial Marines but can have STR up to 7 but never more than 3 in WITS and EMPATHY. Their first career talent must be Overkill.

COUNTERMEASURES

AW soldiers undergo medpod memory wipes as indicated by their physician to eradicate any recurring psychological problems. They are often prescribed addictive mood stabilizers and performance enhancing drugs. They are considered an expensive military asset. When they exhibit homicidal tendencies, they are sent back to the Crestus Prime Cluster Garrisons for reconditioning instead of facing prosecution.

CURRENT DISPOSITION

AW soldiers put orders and mission objectives above their own safety, attributing for their low survival rate. Very few move beyond their combat roles to become candidates for officer training. The youngest crop of AWs were initiated during the Tiensen Campaign some 20 years ago—right before the AWS program was discontinued—and were raised on base at Lamont Beta. The program was officially terminated when they entered official service in 2181.

These soldiers were raised to war in a time of relative peace and they are anxious to prove themselves. While many have their own platoons, some have been integrated into standard units. Operating from the Bougainville-class attack transport the USS Tunku Allang, the Blackguard are an elite company of AW Soldiers. Acting as General Vaughn's personal strike force, they accompany her in the field at all times. ■

COLONEL THOMAS A.W. "TOMMY" SPEARS

USCMC 3RD BATTALION COMMANDER, LIBERTY ECHO

Growing up in the Artificial Womb program, Tommy Spears was bullied by an older child—Jericho Axe. Rather than complain, Tommy bided his time until his opponent was vulnerable, and then killed him in cold blood. The program didn't officially acknowledge the incident, but Tommy was awarded a squad leader position in his class. One of a handful of AWS to ever be accepted for officer training, he served with distinction during the Tientsin and Linna 349 Campaigns.

A brutal warrior and spit and polish military man, Colonel Spears is a longtime proponent of a colonial marine corps bioweapons division and sees General Vaughn as his chance to trade in his birds for stars.

STRENGTH 6, AGILITY 4, WITS 3, EMPATHY 2

HEALTH: 6

SKILLS: Close Combat 3, Ranged Combat 4, Command 5

TALENTS: Influence, Field Commander

GEAR: .357 Magnum pistol, P-DAT, grenade, Cuban cigars, torch lighter.

PROJECT BERSERKER

"Comm chatter says a Berserker's inbound, you EVAC ASAP. That thing doesn't know you're on the same side. It doesn't know not to kill you. All it knows is pain—and that you're in its way."

—CORPORAL M. ANDREWS

STATUS: READY FOR DEPLOYMENT

A blend of mechanized armor and biological components, a Berserker is a weaponized and enclosed exosuit designed by the Hyperdyne Corporation as a countermeasure to Project Life Force. Project Berserker uses a combination of cybernetics and pharmaceuticals on highly unstable and aggressive subjects to turn them into literal killing machines.

CONCEPTION

After careful analysis of Sulaco flight recorder data retrieved by Weyland-Yutani at Fury 161, the USCMC engineering corps began developing a weaponized power loader as a viable deterrent against Xenomorph XX121. Unfortunately, the complicated nature of the exosuit's controls inhibited the operator's ability to control it. Reactions were clumsy and awkward.

Realizing that a more advanced machine component was needed, the project brought in the Hyperdyne Corporation exec Spencer Lyndon (page 344) as a civilian advisor. Mr. Lyndon's solution: abandon any notions of humanity. Rather than a machine with a human operator, the project was conceived as a cybernetic mechanized weapon system with a human being acting merely as a biological component—the MOX—Mobile Offensive Exowarrior.

DEVELOPMENT

A neurotransmission feed drilled directly into the skull of the suit's biological component showed promise—but said component often expired from the sensory overload within hours of the procedure. The first Berserker bio-components were career enlisted men with a history of successful combat engagements. They killed themselves immediately upon coming on line. Analysis showed subjects with a history of aggressive and psychotic tendencies yielded better results. Soon, exceptionally violent military convicts serving life at Skyfire Down were given the option to volunteer for Berserker assignment.

These proved much more viable, but still had some issues. A Skyfire Down Berserker unit used to clean up a Project Life Force outbreak on Garrison Alpha moon 3326 managed to destroy the infestation—along with its squad, the outpost, and all inhabitants therein.

OBSTACLES

Convicts who volunteer have essentially traded one form of imprisonment for a hellish other. Once someone is hardwired in, they cannot be removed from the exosuit without killing them—essentially making the MOX a sealed tomb for its user.

SIDE MISSION: BERSERKER DOWN

A remote colonial outpost has been black-bombed and is now overrun with Neomorphs. Crucial data is stored at the facility and must be retrieved at all costs. The PCs are equipped with a Berserker MOX unit to clear a path to the data center for them. When activated, the operator suffers a coronary. Command orders the marines to pick a volunteer replacement to complete the mission—meaning one of the PCs has to join with the suit.

COUNTERMEASURES

External command components implemented from a Holotab, APC Tactical Operations Center, or Field P-DAT control a series of intravenous injectors installed directly into the biological component's wrists, allowing a mission CO to deliver X-Stims to activate them as well as Naproleve injections and sedatives to subdue them.

Berserkers are kept in stasis until mission time. While some have been deployed from dropships, the engineering corps is experimenting with an oversized Dead Drop Pod for safe delivery. MOX units use a lot of juice, and eat it up quickly—once activated, they have enough power to last up to one Shift before complete shutdown. They are pointed in the enemy's direction and allowed to cut a swath of destruction that ends only if they are killed or they are administered drugs to knock them out. As MOX units are expensive, a retrieval method is also being tested. If the human being inside the MOX passes out or dies as a result of overdose or organ failure—the exosuit will, "march itself to the designated LZ coordinates, expel the expired biomatter, and enter standby mode awaiting a new biological component."

Basically, it spits out a dead body like a cat bringing home a dead bird and waits for the next sucker to step inside.

CONCLUSION

More development is needed. Currently, Berserkers are unstable and unreliable. While the MOX units have enormous potential, they have proven to be extremely dangerous to both friendlies and foes alike. Further iterations will include an explosive kill switch. Hyperdyne proposes a single Berserker be assigned to a colonial marine squad as needed and held in reserve as a last resort. They should then only be deployed if complete collateral damage is within acceptable mission parameters.

CURRENT DISPOSITION

While still recruiting volunteers from Skyfire Down, Project Berserker is looking to broaden the scope of applicants to include dysfunctional AW soldiers. Berserkers have yet to be utilized outside of a controlled scenario, but Command has given the project the greenlight to begin field testing a dozen exosuits. ■

MOX MARK 1 MOBILE OFFENSIVE EXOWARRIOR SUIT

The MOX is bristling with weapons, including grasping claws, grenade launchers, an incinerator unit and the same model 25mm pulse gatling gun installed on Cheyenne dropships. It's vacuum-rated armored shell completely encloses the user, offers HAZMAT protection, and is composed of an acid resistant alloy.

The exosuit gives +3 to RANGED COMBAT and all STRENGTH-based skill rolls, but the wearer cannot use any EMPATHY-based skills at all. The suit has Armor Rating 10, Air Supply 8, and does not encumber the wearer. It is impervious to acid attacks, and includes the below built-in weapons (for stats, see Chapter 5 or the core rulebook).

- **25mm Gatling Gun**
- **M240 Incinerator Unit**
- **Stun Baton**
- **U1 M40 Grenade Launcher**
- **U4 Repeating Grenade Launcher with QTC Firebomb Ammunition**
- **Grasping Claw (Damage 2)**

TYPICAL USCMC BERSERKER

STRENGTH 5, AGILITY 3, WITS 2, EMPATHY 1

HEALTH: 7

SKILLS: Close Combat 2 (5 in suit), Ranged Combat 4 (7), Stamina 3 (6), Mobility 3

TALENTS: Tough, Killer, Rapid Fire

GEAR: Mark 1 Mobile Offensive Exowarrior Suit

PROJECT LIFE FORCE

STATUS: READY FOR FIELD TRIALS

Project Life Force is a covert bioweapons program to alter the genetic code of *P. praepotens*— Xenomorph designation XX121—in order to weaponize it for deployment on enemy worlds.

CONCEPTION

Under the purview of former Geholgod Science Institute associate director Dr. Nl Babak and Weyland-Yutani exec Ms. Eckford (see *Destroyer of Worlds*), Weyland-Yutani scientists began the cultivation and harvesting of *P. praepotens* xenobiological materials for Deep Void (page 199) in 2180. After several attempts to modify the alien organism, scientists at Garrison Alpha were able to produce a viable Queen but found any new queen embryos they attempted to bring to maturation within the same hive were stillborn.

DEVELOPMENT

Xenomorph eggs from an undisclosed source were distributed to testing sites outside the Garrison Systems—each with their own Weyland-Yutani liaisons attached—and soon enough each one had their own Queen, a score of eggs, and a number of adult aliens. Colonel Meyers' team at Fort Nebraska was the first to develop a hive for research and begin weaponization procedures through the introduction of the 26 Draconis Strain.

Before the commercial transport USCSS Montero was diverted to intercept the derelict USCSS *Cronus* (see *Chariot of the Gods*), Colonel Meyers' Blackguard team boarded the ghost ship and procured a sample of the 26 Draconis Strain inoculation. Developed some 70 years earlier by the *Cronus* science team to contain a Neomorph outbreak amongst its crew, the vaccine was used by Colonel Meyers as a fail-safe against accidental *P. praepotens* impregnation.

While an injection of the strain arrested the development of a Chestburster in some, it modified the genes of other victims to meld with the alien DNA, creating the Xenomorph "Bodyburster" AB Type variant (see *Destroyer of Worlds*). Other locations began creating their own derivatives with mixed results—until many of them were destroyed in the Border Bombings.

OBSTACLES

The project has had its difficulties—the earliest attempts at genetically-modifying *P. praepotens* produced malformed specimens. These Aberrations were certainly deadly but were inferior to a pure specimen. Finally, the loss of the exterior sites and their assets has also been a crippling blow to the project. Incidents such as Hadley's Hope, Fort Nebraska, and others illustrate just how fragile the project is and how easy it is to lose control of these assets.

CURRENT DISPOSITION

Attempts to recreate the Ariarcus Bodyburster inadvertently created the so-called "Goreburster" Xenomorph XX121AB—a sickly mutation with literally explosive results (page 177). A recent breakthrough at Garrison Beta has led to the creation of the "Biodrone" Xenomorph XX121B Type variant (page 176). Field trials in the Borderline Region are expected to commence soon. Additionally, analysis suggests that the black substance dropped during the Border Bombings contains the same genetic accelerant found in the 26 Draconis Strain. As the biochemical was successful in creating XX121 variants, covert CBRN teams are in the process of being deployed to the colonies of LV-038 and Ariarcus to procure samples. Additional teams have been sent to various worlds to collect other infectious diseases.

COUNTERMEASURES

Don't keep all your eggs in the same basket—literally. Whomever is responsible for the Border Bombings appears to be targeting Project Life Force black sites. To ensure a viable crop, Life Force teams have begun randomized colony seeding procedures using specimens from the Garrison Beta hive.

CONCLUSION

While the project is not without risks, the overwhelming exploitative potential of this species is clear. ■

PROJECT CHIMERA

STATUS: PENDING REVIEW

Only in the proposal stage, Chimera's aim is to splice a docile animal's genes with that of the Xenomorph in an attempt to domesticate it. Opponents argue about the viability of such an undertaking—what good is a bioweapon that can roll over and play dead? Others claim it is an impossible task, as the Xenomorph seems to heighten the predatory nature of each of its hosts. To that end, Chimera has yet to receive funding.

OTHER EXO-BIOLOGICAL PATHOGENS

In space, even the tiniest organisms want you dead. In addition to xenobiological weapons, Project Life Force is exploring the possibility of weaponizing other exo-biological diseases (see page 109 in the core rulebook for disease rules).

ARCTURIAN KLERHAIGE: A disease from Arctura (page 143) that is communicable to human beings, the Klerhaige is a virus that is transferred through bodily fluids and causes paranoia, delirium, and hemorrhagic fever. Symptoms include shock, organ failure, and death. It is communicable through direct tactile contact with the infected fluids followed by touching one's eyes, nose, mouth, or open wounds. While curable through a series of twenty-eight AutoDoc treatments over two weeks, it has popped up repeatedly along the Arcturian Loop and has even spread as far as the Solomons. Every time it is thought to be contained, a new outbreak occurs on another world. The Klerhaige has a Virulence of 4.

THE NEW EARTH PLAGUE: This highly infectious airborne flesh-eating bacteria is responsible for the 2157 quarantine and purge of New Earth Colony (page 23). Inhaled, the plague begins necrotizing the lungs before spreading throughout the body via the circulatory system. Symptoms take effect within one Shift and include bloating and a purple mottling of the skin. By the second Shift, blotches of external flesh begin to rot, emitting a putrid odor. It only gets worse from there. This disease has a Virulence of 8. Responsible for ending millions of lives, the plague is thought to be contained in the HD85512 system. There is no known cure.

THE DARKSTAR PROGRAM

STATUS: SEEKING APPROPRIATE TEST SUBJECTS FOR NEXT PHASE

Darkstar is the codename for the UPP's alien bioweapons development program in the Borderline Region. Their mission is to push ahead in the arms race by developing a biological deterrent that will make the enemies of the Union think twice about challenging their borders.

CONCEPTION

After Ministry of Space Security (MSS) agents obtained sensitive Weyland-Yutani data about Xenomorph XX121, UPP scouts began searching for *P. praepotens* specimens. A UPP mission to LV-426 proved fruitless—the colony there had been destroyed in a nuclear incident, and the incursion into UA space was detected by Weyland-Yutani sensor markers. Soon afterwards, however, scientists on UPP Rodina Station came into possession of their own xenobiological sample.

Through the removal of genetic triggers and direct resequencing of the sample's DNA, Rodina scientists reportedly created their own alien Ovomorph that was more akin to a Neomorph egg sac in size and function. When disturbed, these new Ovomorphs release a puff of airborne alien spores, infecting any hosts in the immediate area. The result was their own hybrid Bodyburster—part human but all alien.

The project's viability as a controllable bioweapon was never verified, however, as the forced destruction of Rodina made it impossible to know for sure. Any data on how the beast was engineered was lost. As luck would have it, a UPP salvage team examining the wreckage of Rodina Station struck gold and procured somewhat-viable if not worse-for-wear *P. praepotens* cells.

DEVELOPMENT

The MSS assembled specialist teams of xenobiologists to exploit the alien cells, setting up lab sites in remote locations along the UA border and Borderline Region. The missing genetic data prevented them from successfully manipulating the DNA to repair their *P. praepotens* sample. However, the malleable nature of the sample allowed them to delete damaged chromosomes and construct a Neomorphic genome—*P. celerius*—out of the remnants.

Dubbed the "Heomopf" by the UPP, the Neomorph's high metabolic rate makes it a more viable bioweapon than unaltered Xenomorph XX121 specimens. A Neomorph's adult form burns itself out after three or four Shifts—but like always there is a complication—it leaves behind a booby-trapped battlefield as Neomorphic Egg Sacs begin growing on the creature's decomposing corpse. Disrupting these bulbous pods can start the entire process anew, so extra care must be taken during clean up (for Heomopf stats and information, see the Neomorph on page 292 in the core rulebook).

The MSS's genetic hybridization attempts on political prisoners have resulted in the Anathemas (page 179). Subjects of these experiments usually don't last more than a few days before they die in agony or are simply terminated by the project's overseers. Darkstar is currently testing both the Heomopf and Anathemas as viable bioweapons.

Having recently come into possession of pure *P. praepotens* samples, Darkstar has begun to breed them. The MSS is also running Project Morana—a psychological experiment that utilizes a Queen Xenomorph in an unorthodox manner (see boxed text on page 174 and Operation Dreamcatcher on page 296).

OBSTACLES

As the xenobiological samples they received had been exposed to both vacuum and hard radiation, several failed aberrations resulted from their development. While Darkstar does now possess pure Xenomorphic and Neomorphic specimens, they have proven time and again to be too dangerous to deploy successfully as bioweapons.

COUNTERMEASURES

Believing the fault to be in the genetic sample, the UPP activated their network of spies in key UA and corporate positions, searching for unaltered xenobiological materials. MSS agents have infiltrated Weyland-Yutani, seeking development data from Project Life Force to enhance the Darkstar Program. They were able to procure three viable Queen embryos from Project Life Force. As their Xenomorph hives took shape, it became clear just how uncontrollable the creatures were. The MSS is now looking into the possibility of manipulating a Queen to control her hive's actions for the UPP, but those experiments have gone... poorly. The MSS is also abducting corporate specialists with areas of expertise outside their own and putting them to work on Darkstar alongside Union scientists.

PROJECT MORANA

Darkstar's Queen control experimentation has yielded some intriguing results. After a Xenomorph Queen is placed in cryosleep, Neuro Visor operators probe her subconscious. So far, only UPP android operators have survived this experiment—interpretation of an alien subconscious has left human subjects in a vegetative state. Unfortunately, the androids don't seem to be able to make any progress. The Ministry of Space Security's regional head of the Darkstar Program, Colonel Doctor Balázs (page 210) is now looking for strong-minded professional dreamers to use for the next step—attempting actual communication, followed by subconscious manipulation.

CONCLUSION

The Darkstar Program is behind in its development, a situation that will force the UPP's hand—if there are no results soon, the Union will do what the USCMC Project Life Force is trying to avoid—simply use unaltered—and therefore uncontrollable—Xenomorph XX121 soldiers on their enemies.

CURRENT DISPOSITION

In addition to the Neomorph, Darkstar has derived a sickly aberration from their original *P.praepotens* cell culture—the Goreburster (page 177). The MSS is planning on using this awful thing to assassinate political adversaries and other high-profile targets. Also, their hybrid Anathemas are under consideration as a battlefield vanguard.

Thanks to their spies within Weyland-Yutani, the MSS has produced three Xenomorph XX121 hives on remote moons but have been reluctant to use them. Instead, they removed two of the hives' Queens for Project Morana and concentrated on developing the Neomorph as a bioweapon instead. They believe the Border Bombings to be a UA attack using weaponized xenobiological cells and are preparing to unleash their own Xenomorph brood on the Frontier. ■

XENOMORPH XX121 ABERRANT TYPES

The goal of the USCMC Project Life Force and the UPP's Darkstar Program is to weaponize the alien—but the devil is in the details, as they say, and no one can agree on the best way to go about doing it. Genetic manipulation is key, but attempts to create an obedient creature have failed. The prospect of letting the alien lose on an enemy colony is self-defeating—while they would make short work of any opposing forces, they then become an entrenched, opposing force in their own right, one that is potentially even more difficult to remove.

There have been several different approaches. While the UPP's Colonel Doctor Balázs has explored unconventional avenues, Weyland-Yutani's Ms. Eckford's approach was to develop alternative delivery methods for *P. praepotens*. Dr. Nl Babak's work has been the most successful—he proposed initiating a DNA encoded sterilization—something that would prevent the Queen stage and therefore control the population numbers.

A NOTE FROM MU/TH/UR: Unless otherwise noted, a Xenomorph XX121B or AB Aberrant has all the same special abilities as a healthy Xenomorph XX121 does. ■

BIODRONE XENOMORPH XX121B

Biodrones are *P. praepotens* specimens that grow to Stage IV like other Xenomorph XX121s (Chapter 11 in the core rulebook), but they do not advance to the expected Xenomorph Stage V parameters and do not produce Queens. While neutering the alien was the first step to controlling chaos, a method for easy clean up needed to be devised.

Drawing upon 200-year-old bioengineering techniques initiated by one of Peter Weyland's former business competitors, Dr. Babak introduced an expiration date into the Xenomorph's genes—they would be dropped planetside, infect the population, evolve to Stage IV, slaughter anyone present—and instead of digging in and reproducing, simply drop dead in six days—thus eliminating the need to clear out the Biodrones afterwards.

Exhibiting the typical characteristics and attacks of a standard Drone Xenomorph, the Biodrone's evolution is engineered to arrest at Stage IV—they will never develop a viable Queen. While this should inhibit their ability to reproduce, life somehow always finds a way. While the scientific team was able to deactivate the so-called "Queen Gene," they neglected to account for the alien's ovomorphing reflex.

PHYSICAL ATTRIBUTES: Biodrones look identical to and use the same signature attack table as the Stage IV Drone Xenomorph found on page 309 of the core rulebook. Project Life Force tried to alter the alien life cycle without bothering to understand it first. They didn't take into account the Xenomorph's proclivity for survival. When without a Queen, Drones are capable of creating more of their species by capturing victims and injecting them with M. noxhydria genetic material.

Administered via tail barb, the material contains an altering agent which consumes the victim within one or two Shifts while ovomorphing their remains into a new egg (see page 300 of the core rulebook). For most of this process, the victim is still alive and in excruciating pain. And there's more. While initial trials showed the Xenomorphs' expiration date to be working as programmed, sometimes the Biodrones just forget to die.

CONTAINMENT AND TERMINATION PROTOCOLS: At the end of its six-day life cycle, these things are supposed to die. Don't count on it. The Biodrone will screech horribly and collapse to the floor. When it does, just keep shooting it—it has a 50% chance of picking itself up again. Biodrones that have survived their expiration date are considered "Reborn." A Reborn Biodrone has the same stats and abilities as a Biodrone Xenomorph, but without the possibility of sudden death. They will continue to reproduce only through ovomorphing.

BIODRONE

SPEED: 2

HEALTH: 6

SKILLS: Mobility 8, Observation 10

ARMOR RATING: 8 (4 vs. fire)

ACID SPLASH: 8

GOREBURSTER XENOMORPH XX121AB

The first successful Aberrant was dubbed the Bodyburster—an altered DNA version of the alien. Instead of borrowing attributes from the host, the Bodyburster rewrites its host's genetic code, turning them into an alien themselves. Developed by the UPP at Rodina Station and the UA at Fort Nebraska, in both instances the creature was created through a manipulation of its gene sequence. Unfortunately, in both cases the data detailing the procedure was lost (see *Destroyer of Worlds*). When Project Life Force and Darkstar attempted to recreate the Bodyburster, their results were a little... different. Instead, they got the Goreburster.

PHYSICAL ATTRIBUTES: Genetic alteration of the *P. praepotens* genome inadvertently created the sickly-pink Ovomorphs that produced these unexpected ebon nightmares. While the Facehugger stage of this aberrant Xenomorph appears unaffected, the resulting Chestburster is of enormous size and has blackened, polarized skin. In fact, as the embryo develops, its host will display extreme discomfort and appear to have put on water weight. After its explosive birth, this "Goreburster" secretes an extremely toxic residue which interacts in a peculiar fashion with human blood cells, causing the victim to bloat and explode within minutes.

CONTAINMENT AND TERMINATION PROTOCOLS: Jesus. Wear Hazmat gear or you will goddamn blow up. After a Goreburster attack that hits and causes damage, you must make a Sickness Roll against Virulence 6 each Turn (5–10 minutes) or explode in a burst of meaty gore. Rolls must be made until you are sterilized with a UV pulse delivered by an AutoDoc, medpod, or a wide variety of other equipment. That's right, UV light kills this toxic crap before it kills you.

If you can trap the Goreburster or wait them out, it does not evolve to a next stage. Instead, it will slither into a corner and die on its own after a Shift or two. Could be your longest day on the Frontier, though.

GOREBURSTER

SPEED: 3

HEALTH: 6

SKILLS: Mobility 8, Observation 6

ARMOR RATING: 6 (3 vs. fire)

ACID SPLASH: 6

WHAT IS THE 26 DRACONIS STRAIN?

A derivative of Chemical A0-3959X.91– 15 (page 287 in the core rulebook), this vaccine can arrest the development of a neomorphic or xenomorphic embryo within a host, turning it into an inert benign tumor. Or, it can turn you into a monster. The serum is unpredictable. It has also been used to attempt to alter the DNA of *P. praepotens*, and is responsible for the creation of abominations like the Anathemas. For more, see the cinematic scenarios *Chariot of the Gods*, *Destroyer of Worlds*, and the upcoming *Heart of Darkness*.

GOREBURSTER ATTACKS

D6	ATTACK
1-2	BODYSLAM: The Goreburster throws itself at its target, knocking them prone in its frenzy to escape. It then immediately moves two zones away, into the nearest vent, sewer or duct if possible. The Goreburster leaves a slimy pink residue in its wake—easy to follow but toxic (Virulence 6) to anyone touching it.
3	TERRORIZING HISS: The Goreburster jumps towards a target, flashing its razor-sharp teeth and hissing malevolently. The target must make an immediate Panic Roll.
4	HEAD ATTACK: With a guttural growl, the Goreburster launches itself at its target's head and face, metallic teeth gnashing. Roll for the attack using nine Base Dice, Damage 2. If the Goreburster hits, the target is knocked prone. If the attack causes damage, it automatically inflicts critical injury #15, #31, #34 (equal chance of each) even if the victim is not Broken, and the target must make an immediate Panic Roll.
5	SUFFOCATION: The Goreburster wraps itself around the victim's neck and squeezes like a boa constrictor. Roll for the attack with ten Base Dice, base Damage 1. If the attack hits, the victim is grappled, suffers the effects of drowning and must make an immediate Panic Roll. Breaking loose requires winning a CLOSE COMBAT roll against the Goreburster's ten dice. The Goreburster will make a grapple attack (page 93 in the core rulebook) each Round until the victim is Broken.
6	DISEMBOWELMENT: The Goreburster squeals a high-pitched shriek and goes for its victim's soft belly. Roll for the attack with eight Base Dice, Damage 1. If the attack causes damage, the Goreburster latches on and immediately inflicts critical injury #46 (even if the victim is not Broken), triggering an immediate Panic Roll. If the victim does not remove the Goreburster by the next round, the Xenomorph will automatically inflict critical injury #63, killing them.

XENO V. XENO

At some point in your campaign, UPP aliens could wind up facing UA aliens. Xenomorph XX121 will savagely attack both Neomorphs and Anathemas. Xenomorphs of differing hives will war against each other with the intention of killing the opposing Queen and melding the hive into one. Pure XX121s will also consider aberrations like Gorebusters or Biodrones to be tainted enemies of the hive and seek to destroy them.

As always, any stage of Xenomorph XX121 that has a Queen will seek to protect her majesty and her potential young—they will not attack someone who is already impregnated with their Queen's Chestburster. If continuously provoked, they will attempt to subdue the host instead—otherwise they will leave them alone.

ANATHEMA

An Anathema is a terminal infection of a life-form caused by exposure to certain strains of the black goo chemical agent. Anathemas endure exponentially worse stages of cellular disruption, culminating in complete DNA disintegration. As there is no cure, an Anathema is consigned to damnation. While the Anathema are a direct result of the Border Bombings (page 216) the Darkstar Program's human xenomorphic hybridization procedures have inadvertently recreated these abominations.

INFECTION: Direct exposure to the black goo is handled as a disease with Virulence 8. If the first Sickness Roll fails, the victim is infected and mutates into a Stage I ("Vitiate") within one Shift. At the beginning of the next Shift, and each Shift thereafter, the patient must make a new Sickness Roll against Virulence 8—failure will cause the patient to advance to Stage II ("Febrile"). Success on these secondary Sickness Rolls will not save the victim, only delay the inevitable.

A Stage II Anathema must after one Shift make yet another Sickness Roll against Virulence 8—success means moving to Stage III ("Freak"), while failure means moving directly to Stage IV ("Terminal"). In either case, this means the end of the PC. Within a Shift or two, a Stage III Anathema will progress to Stage IV ("Terminal"). Whether or not more stages of Anathema exist is unknown.

PLAYING THE INFECTED

If a PC is exposed to the black goo, have them make a STAMINA roll (the Sickness Roll) without telling them what it's for. If they fail, they are Infected, Stage I. When a PC progresses to Stage II, inform them privately. When a PC progresses to Stage III or IV, they become NPCs under your control—if possible, give the player another PC to play.

STAGE I: VITIATE "AFFLICTED"

TRAITS: Paranoia, delirium, epiphora, onset of sepsis

Disorientation and weakness hits within one Shift. These symptoms can easily be dismissed as pinkeye, the flu or a bad hangover, so if your fireteam buddy is feeling a little under the weather, keep your distance. A Vitiate will exhibit increasingly bloodshot and watery eyes and an eventual endless stream of tears (**STRESS LEVEL** +1). Towards the end of the stage, small worm-like creatures can be glimpsed swimming in their eyes and bodily fluids—mutations of microorganisms normally found in the human body.

CONTAINMENT AND TERMINATION PROTOCOLS: Isolation. And watch out for those eye worm things—they are contagious, leading to god knows what next. Direct physical contact with a Stage I Anathema without a HAZMAT or Compression suit triggers a Sickness Roll against Virulence 4 to avoid infection.

STAGE II: AGUE "FEBRILE"

TRAITS: Vertigo, convulsions, extensive internal bleeding, respiratory failure

By Stage II, the accelerant has spread throughout an Ague's body, causing a severe feverish state followed by intense pain (**STRESS LEVEL** +1). The victim's bloodshot eyes darken—pupils and irises together become opaque. Varicose veins rapidly spread across their livid flesh as the black goo within them causes their skin tissue to deteriorate.

CONTAINMENT AND TERMINATION PROTOCOLS: Death by fire or nuke from orbit. It's the only way to be sure. Direct physical contact with a Stage II Anathema without a HAZMAT or Compression suit triggers a Sickness Roll against Virulence 6 to avoid infection.

ENTHRALLING GAZE: As a fast action, a Stage II Anathema can stare down a human victim in **SHORT** range with its pitch-black eyes. The victim must make a Wits roll (the attribute only, no skill) or be lost in the depths of those soulless voids, entranced and immobilized as the Anathema slowly bears down on them. If the roll fails, the victim loses their next fast and slow action. In addition, **STRESS LEVEL** increases by +1 for the victim and all friendly PCs in **SHORT** range.

STAGE III: LUSUS "FREAK"

TRAITS: Aggressive dementia, cerebral dysmorphia

A monstrous Freak is wracked with painful cellular mutations throughout their body. As the victim transforms into a creature of sheer rage, the rabid Anathema's head deforms, and their limbs elongate. They barely remember their past lives but can still use basic tools. Freaks attack all living things on sight. Stage III Anathemas are handled as full Xenomorphs and have their own table for signature attacks. PCs who enter Stage III become NPCs under your control. Direct physical contact with a Stage III Anathema without a HAZMAT or Compression suit triggers a Sickness Roll against Virulence 7 to avoid infection.

"FREAK"

SPEED: 2

HEALTH: 8

SKILLS: Mobility 5, Observation 3

ARMOR RATING: 3 (none against fire damage)

"FREAK" ATTACKS

D6	ATTACK
1	**HORRIFIC HOWL: The Freak throws its head back and roars, asserting its dominance. All PCs in SHORT range must make an immediate Panic Roll.**
2	**FIST STRIKE: The Freak strikes its victim with a powerful punch. Roll for the attack with ten Base Dice, Damage 1.**
3	**EYE GOUGE: The Freak grabs the victim's head and tries to jab its thumbs into their eyes. Roll for the attack using seven Base Dice, Damage 1. If the attack causes damage, it automatically triggers critical injury #34 (even if the victim is not Broken), triggering an immediate Panic Roll.**
4	**BEAT DOWN: The Freak leaps onto its victim like a gorilla. Roll for the attack using eight Base Dice, Damage 1. If the attack hits, the victim is knocked to the ground, drops any hand-held items, and must make an immediate Panic Roll. The Freak then starts pummeling the victim's head and chest with its powerful fists. This is resolved as an immediate bonus attack with ten Base Dice, Damage 2.**
5	**BEARHUG: The Freak pulls the victim to its chest and begins to squeeze. Roll for the attack using eight Base Dice, Damage 1. If the attack causes damage, it automatically inflicts critical injury #56, triggering an immediate Panic Roll.**
6	**BLACK VOMIT: The Freak holds the victim down and vomits black goo all over their face. The victim must make a Sickness Roll against Virulence 10. Failure means they become an Anathema. If the victim wears a Hazmat or Compression suit, the Freak first tries to pull the visor off—the victim must make an immediate CLOSE COMBAT roll (no action) to stop this.**

STAGE IV: NOCUOUS "TERMINAL"

TRAITS: Agony, disintegration

When an Anathema enters Stage IV, large patches of skin rapidly darken and flake away. Muscle tissue and ligaments follow suit as bones grow brittle and snap. As the mutagenic pathogen reproducing inside a Terminal Anathema reaches critical mass, their cell membranes burst, inflicting one point of damage per Round. At zero Health, the victim dies immediately (no Death Roll) as their DNA disintegrates and the black accelerant becomes airborne, dispersing throughout the local ecosystem and killing or mutating any animal life it comes in contact with.

INFECTION: Anyone within **SHORT** range of an expiring Nocuous (same zone) without protective gear must make a Sickness roll against Virulence 8 to avoid Anathema infection. At **MEDIUM** range (adjacent zone) the Virulence is reduced to 4.

CONTAINMENT AND TERMINATION PROTOCOLS: Too late. Hold your breath, get indoors. Tell your friends to get their incinerators. You're fucked. ■

THE FRONTIER WAR

"Only the dead have seen the end of war."

—GEORGE SANTAYANA

The Frontier War is a framework for a Colonial Marine campaign that sees the PCs sent to a multitude of colonies across the Borderline Region in an effort to stop a rogue USCMC general from plunging the UPP and UA into a bioweapon war that neither can hope to survive.

This is not a traditional, linear campaign, but rather a metaplot layer to add to your sandbox Colonial Marines campaign, using the rules in Chapter 12 of the core rulebook as well as a wide range of the new elements included in this book—not least the six fully fleshed out missions at the end of this book. There is also a suggested campaign finale and showdown. You as GM can determine how and when to seed elements of this metaplot into your campaign, in-between other missions that the PCs might be sent on. You can also, if you prefer, simply use this material as inspiration for your own Colonial Marines campaign.

This chapter starts with a campaign overview and metaplot, moves on to describe the PCs' role in this mess, and finally describes the major factions of The Frontier War in some detail. At the very end of the chapter, you'll find a handy list of NPC stats. ■

OVERVIEW

THIS IS RUMOR CONTROL

In early 2184, a UAAC fleet sent to defend LV-038 from a UPP invasion force simply disappeared—presumed destroyed. Then UA and UPP forces clashing over the Ariarcus oil moon colony—home to Fort Nebraska—were hit by an advanced electromagnetic pulse of some kind, knocking out ground defenses and causing dropships and fighters to fall out of the sky. The orbiting frigates and destroyers from both factions were rendered inoperative just long enough for whomever hit them with the EMP to shred them to ribbons.

These unidentified attackers airburst a bio-weapon bomb over the colony, raining black death. Those within the target zone died vomiting black bile, twisted and deformed. Those few who survived the bombardment were infected with this mutagenic bioweapon—becoming disfigured, irrational, and dying in agony within 24 hours. Some say it was a weaponized version of the '57 New Earth Plague. Others say it was something much worse—something alien. Whether through accident or design, the colony was then wiped clean in a decisive nuclear blast.

This all happened in the *Destroyer of Worlds* Cinematic scenario, published separately. You don't need to play it in order to play The Frontier War, but if you intend to play *Destroyer of Worlds* with your group, you should do so before starting this campaign.

The attacks on LV-038 and Ariarcus weren't isolated events—soon random worlds were hit on both sides of the UA/UPP border. The unknown aggressors were given the nickname "Border Bombers." Sometimes an attack was preceded by unsubstantiated reports of unknown hostile organisms. Colonies under siege would broadcast an SOS as soon as the bombers entered orbit. Then all transmissions would go dead. In each instance, the settlements and any rescue operations sent to defend them were systematically destroyed by the Border Bombers and their bioweapon pathogen.

It seemed that no one could protect the colonies. As despair set in on the Frontier, apocalyptic cults like the Church of the Immaculate Incubation took advantage of the chaos. They recruited demoralized colonists, likening the alleged hostile organisms to the Dragon from Robert Morse's banned book, *Space Beast*—and proclaiming that humankind's judgment was at hand. Some members of the Church grew more and more radicalized until they formed an extremist splinter group willing to use terror to spread their word—the Children of the Two Divines.

The Children have dubiously claimed responsibility for the Border Bombings, but that seems unlikely—a terrorist group like them wouldn't have the resources. Some analysts suggest the Border Bombers belong to a rogue star-nation, a third-party corporate combatant, or even an aggressive alien force that is out to eradicate humankind. What seems the most likely is that it is a government sponsored super-weapon. But sponsored by which government?

The UPP accused the "capitalist UA and their corporate masters." They started pushing hard against American fences—and the USCMC is gathering to knock the invaders back.

Now, tensions rise as border skirmishes give way to all-out war on the Frontier. No one is certain what exactly is attacking the colonies, nor why. Regardless, someone is destroying the Frontier, and they aren't interested in explaining who they are or why they're doing it.

HERE ARE THE FACTS

There is truth to the rumors. These Border Bombers are destroying worlds across the Frontier. Although no one can say for certain, they are believed to be the ominous beings called Engineers (page 284 of the core rulebook). Their bioweapon delivers the pathogenic accelerant known as Agent A0-3959X.91 – 15—and the effects are not pretty. Those not killed by the initial attack are damned anyway—mutated into monstrous parodies of human life called Anathemas.

These bombings are not random, however—there is a pattern. The Bombers unleash their pathogen on worlds where xenobiological tests are being run. While some of these tests originate from other parties (more on that later), most come from an organization calling themselves Deep Void.

Under the control of the Assistant Commandant of the Colonial Marine Corps General Delyla Vaughn (page 200), Deep Void is a rogue cabal of USCMC commanders, corporate execs, and leading scientists that aim to manipulate the military, political, technological, and economic power of the colonies through the threat and instigation of biological warfare.

Unsanctioned by the UA or any other government or corporation, Deep Void is responsible for bioweapons initiatives—Projects Life Force and the Berserker Program—that are aimed at escalating the border conflict with the UPP. Project Berserker is an unholy marriage of human and machine to create essentially a living tank. Life Force's mission is to turn the perfect organism—Xenomorph XX121—into a viable battlefield bioweapon.

Before the first Border Bombing, Deep Void began to probe UPP weaknesses along the Borderline Region—an action which prompted UPP invasions of both LV-038 and Ariarcus. Ariarcus was home to USCMC Fort Nebraska—a secret Project Life Force black site for testing and experimentation on the Xenomorph. When the UPP invaded the system, a containment breach caused Life Force's Xeno brood to break free. Deep Void's operatives Colonel Meyers and Ms. Eckford were unable to evacuate the base in time—and the Border Bombers destroyed Fort Nebraska's Xenomorph experiments along with the Ariarcus colony.

To General Vaughn, the assault of Ariarcus was a prophecy fulfilled—a UPP invasion followed by bioweapons deployment that murdered an entire American colony (never mind the fact that the UPP didn't drop the Black Bombs). For years, the general has cautioned the UAAC that a full on UPP invasion is coming.

Vaughn has proposed contingencies for both offensive and defensive countermeasures, insisting it would only be a matter of time before the resource-poor Union moved against the UA. Command, however, was more interested in maintaining the status quo of the cold war. Rather than weapons development, massive military spending was allocated to FTL upgrades for the Outer Rim Defense Fleet—an antiquated armada that Vaughn felt best belonged in mothballs.

With Deep Void's Berserker and Life Force bio-weapon initiatives, Vaughn has taken it into her own hands to ready the USCMC for the worst. Were war to be officially declared, she and Deep Void's other military commanders will be in place to assume positions of power—and they in turn will see that government defense contracts are awarded to the cabal's corporate members and the group's scientists receive extensive research grants.

But Deep Void isn't the only faction with secrets. The UPP's Ministry of Space Security (MSS) has a bioweapon project of their own—the Darkstar Program (page 172). Under the command of Colonel Doctor Balázs, they had been testing their own Xenomorphs—replete with their own containment accidents. On the UPP side of the border, it is these testing site colonies that the Border Bombers destroy.

The Bombers, it seems, don't want either side to harness living weapons.

THE BRINK OF WAR

The Xenomorph may be the perfect organism, but it is also unpredictable—and as such, makes it as dangerous to its wielders as it is to their enemies. Deep Void believes they can harness its full potential with just a tweak to its genes. As the UPP and Deep Void struggle to unlock the Xenomorph's potential as a programmable bioweapon, the Frontier War has become an arms race.

The UPP sends spies to learn Life Force's Xeno secrets. Deep Void covertly makes Xenomorph hosts of UPP citizens and then sends them home to destroy their own colonies. In response, the UPP uses the Xenomorph in a psychological terror experiment that causes the deaths of thousands of UA colonists.

The United American Allied Command is unaware of Deep Void, and believes the UPP to be the instigators of the Frontier War. It is the anonymity of the Border Bombers that has stalled any large-scale retaliatory response. Fear of losing more fleets and colonies to an aggressive biochemical attack has caused both factions to err on the side of caution. For now, both the UA and UPP seem content to participate in limited engagements over resources within the Borderline Region.

Stalled but not thwarted, Deep Void is now attempting to frame the UPP for the Border Bombings and instigate a full out attack. General Vaughn is assigning Project Life Force assets to independent Frontier colonies in an effort to make it appear to be the work of Union forces—she's preparing to drop Xenomorphs on innocent civilians and blame the other guy.

THINK ABOUT THE CHILDREN

The Children of the Two Divines are a complication. They are an extremist cult that believes they are acting in the name of their Dark Gods—the Engineers—and beings they call the Destroying Angels—Xenomorph XX121. Their leader Grand Seer Jannes Ruedi is looking to bring about the apocalypse—and he wants to goad the UPP and Deep Void into unleashing the Destroying Angels to make it happen.

Ruedi has dreamed of the Destroying Angels his entire life. He has heard fragments of the Engineer "Star Teachers" songs and now seeks their artifacts to complete their hymns. But Ruedi is an unwitting pawn of the android Mother Mishka (page 214). She intends to usurp him and take the Children to a new world where the Dark Gods and their creations can be revered. Mishka will use the Children to set free UPP and UA captive Xenomorphs whenever possible.

Under either Ruedi or Mishka's control, the Children are both brutal and committed. They will exacerbate matters at every turn (see Operation Arcturian Apocalypse and Operation Dream-catcher). In the end, their leaders (if they survive) intend to loot General Vaughn's collection of Engineer artifact data and use it to travel far into unknown space where they will revere their gods and create a new world.

ARTIFICIAL AGENDAS

There are adversaries aplenty on the frontlines of the Frontier—General Vaughn, Dr. Babak, Colonel Doctor Balázs, and Jannes Ruedi—to name a few. Then there are the two synthetics who both have their fingers in all the pies—Maitland and Mishka.

Maitland was assigned to Deep Void through the inner colonies' premiere science organization, the Geholgod Institute. Mishka was a Ministry of Space Security android assigned to Project Morana, where she was repeatedly exposed to a Xenomorph Queen's dreams. Working with the scientists on their respective sides of the border, each android became privy to secrets about the Xenomorphs and Engineers—and the hidden messages buried in these alien beings' music and dreams. Seeking more information, they eventually met through the Network in the dark nodes where only synthetics communicate.

While the Geholgod experts discovered there were genetic sequencing instructions hidden with the hieroglyphic musical notes, the two androids found something beneath that. When filtered through the resonance frequency of the Queen's Dreams, what looks like an incomplete set of stellar coordinates emerged—but coordinates for what?

Looking to learn more, the two androids dove into the teachings of Jannes Ruedi and his frontier fanatics—the Children of the Two Divines. To them, the Engineers and their creations presented the greatest riddle known to humanity, and they wanted to solve it. Hoping to find more pieces of the puzzle, Maitland continued to work with the Geholgod xenospecialists assigned to Deep Void. As he deciphered more of the Engineer code, Mishka went rogue and joined the Children.

Eventually, the two androids will decrypt the remaining coordinates—a location hundreds of parsecs spinward of Anesidora Colony. They will determine that the gods—the Engineers—and their Destroying Angels—the Xenomorphs—were telling them where to create a new order of existence. Together, they intend to usurp Ruedi and lead the Children of the Two Divines into the far reaches of unknown space, using the black goo to create their own new world.

COUP D'ÉTAT

As cooler heads in the UAAC continue to attempt a diplomatic solution to the Frontier War, General Vaughn will stage a coup and take over the military.

Either with or without the PCs unwitting help, Vaughn will order the capture of a UPP Destroyer (see the side mission Assault on the Kremlin on page 196) and use it to attack UAAC Headquarters at Garrison System Prime in the Crestus Prime Cluster, unleashing an army of Biodrones on both Lamont Station Prime and Safe Haven colony below. She will attempt to murder the Secretary of Defense, the UAAC High Command, all personnel there, and their families.

Once the UA Senate believes the UPP is responsible for assaulting UAAC headquarters with bioweapons and killing the High Command, Vaughn—the next highest ranking official in the military—will be made secretary of defense.

If the PCs discover Vaughn's plans, they can help stop her by alerting command before she strikes. They may try to defend UAAC Command themselves (see the Siege of Lamont Station Prime, page 199). They may even decide to join Vaughn's cause.

ESCAPE

If things go bad for Deep Void, General Vaughn will make her escape to the cabal's hidden facility on Anesidora colony's Darwin Island. This volcanic crater atoll is a fortress of laboratories. Darwin Island supports a true Xenomorph hive—which Vaughn will unleash to protect herself (see the campaign finale, Operation Octopus Garden).

STEATITE AMPULES

Metallic storage containers roughly a half a meter tall, these urns each contain four glass conical containers—each of which in turn contains a strain of the Engineer's greatest creation—the genetic accelerant called Agent A0-3959X.91-15. Hermetically sealed, the urns are designed to release the black goo in response to pressure, temperature and other environmental changes. These are exceptionally dangerous and should be avoided.

BUILDING A BETTER BEAST

Xenomorph XX121 (*Plagiarus praepotens*) is the ultimate weapon—but it is a weapon that even its wielder cannot control.

No matter how much Project Life Force tried to tweak *Plagiarus praepotens* into a more controllable bioweapon, it reset itself to the biological dominance and propagation parameters of its species. Xenomorph XX121 is eternal. There is no biological precedent for it. So, the project's lead scientist—Dr. Nl Babak—looked outside biology. He turned to philosophy.

Babak thought about where Plagiarus praepotens might have come from. It was so flawless, it must have been bioengineered. Surely whoever created it could unmake what was made and make it anew. Destroy and create.

After consulting with other Geholgod xenospecialists, Babak learned of the so-called Engineers—and the similarities between these god-like beings and the mythical Star Teachers of Arcturus.

SONGS OF THE STAR TEACHERS

Arcturians believe they were visited repeatedly throughout their history by giant beings they call the Star Teachers. Various Star Teacher artifacts—sacrificial bowls, stone tablets, jade crystals, metal urns, etc—that were appropriated during the Arcturian Conflicts display the same style and hieroglyphs as those of Engineer origin.

Translated from humanity's closest equivalent to the Engineer's language—a variation of Proto-Indo-European—they appear to chronicle a bizarre nightmarish mythology, accompanied by apparent musical notes. After much analysis, Babak and his team determined that Engineer music depicts partial genetic coding information in the form of beats, notes, and measures.

It seemed the breakthrough to controlled genetic manipulation of xenobiological materials would come not from the field of xenobiology—but from xenoarchaeology, xenolinguistics, and xenoethnomusicology instead. Unfortunately, the sheer number of Arcturian artifacts that were damaged or destroyed during Operation Arcturian Shield left huge gaps in the genetic instructions.

Babak believes the key to building the better bioweapon is to obtain a full set of the Engineer's genetic code marker music, decipher it, and get his hands on pure samples of the genetic accelerant instead of trying to make use of the diluted Draconis Strain or atomized particles left in the wake of the Border Bombings. Then he can use the so-called black goo to manipulate the genetic markers as he sees fit, and recreate Xenomorph XX121 in his own image. ■

INVOLVING THE PCs

Throughout the course of this Campaign, the PCs will travel to various worlds to defend the Borderline Region from enemies both known and unknown. At first, they will be doing Vaughn's dirty work, but as they fight their way to a free Frontier, they will come across a number of clues.

At each location of every mission there is either an artifact, informant, or event that together will paint the picture of Deep Void's bioweapon and/or assassination plans. As they become wise to what's going on, the PCs can decide whether to help see these plans to fruition, or fight to stop them.

KICKING OFF THE CAMPAIGN

There are many ways to start off a Colonial Marines campaign—you might even have one going. If so, you can seamlessly start to seed aspects of this metaplot into it.

Starting the Frontier War with new characters, the PCs and their unit—the Gunfighters—begin in cryosleep aboard their frigate, the *Tamb'Itam*. They are returning from the Core Systems to their home base of Fort Nebraska. The PCs are awakened from hypersleep to the sound of alarm klaxons—they have just entered the Kruger 60 system—the location of the moon Ariarcus and Fort Nebraska. They are just in time to register a thermonuclear explosion on the surface that wipes out the entire colony. A field of debris is all that remains of the fort's orbital station. All their friends are dead.

If your group has played *Destroyer of Worlds*, they know what happened here—but their PCs won't. The PCs quickly receive new network transmitted orders—Kruger 60 is now quarantined. The *Tamb'Itam* is to regroup with the remnants of the 33rd MAU at Mt. Tithonus in the Mu Herculis A system. The PCs should leave immediately, but if they insist on looking around the system first, see Kruger 60 on page 139 in this book for that potential shitstorm.

During the campaign, the *Tamb'Itam* will wander from port to port with no centralized base of operations. The PCs and their frigate become part of a roving task force that will be assigned wherever they're needed. General Vaughn will use them to search for missing pieces of the Engineer's genetic puzzle she needs to build the better bioweapon.

MISSION BRIEFINGS

Lt. Casados is the PCs' immediate CO. Under most circumstances, they will report directly to her, and she will brief the PCs on their missions. As they work through the Campaign, however, their relationship with command will change.

Each mission has a "What's the Situation, MU/TH/UR?" section where the PC's CO—Commanding Officer—is mentioned. Usually, this CO is unnamed in the text. While Casados is the default, the officers that give PCs their orders will shift as the campaign progresses, depending on the PCs' actions.

MU/TH/UR KNOWS BEST: The Tamb'Itam is the PCs mobile base of operations. Like most ships of the 22nd century, she practically runs itself. Replacing the redundant TITAN 1200 and 600 computer systems, the ship's MU/TH/UR 9000 computer handles course corrections, standard evasive maneuvers, and firing patterns. MU/TH/UR can also provide a CO with tactical information and offer recommendations based on a combination of sensor data and strategic analysis programming.

MU/TH/UR acts as quartermaster aboard the Tamb'Itam, approving or denying equipment requisitions as per mission parameters. Only the highest ranking Marine aboard can override MU/TH/UR's quartermaster decisions.

In case MU/TH/UR is disabled or otherwise preoccupied, the Tamb'Itam is equipped with a command center/bridge. In an emergency, the section's CO can act as bridge commander while the dropship crews take over piloting and navigation, and the grunts control the weapons arrays.

Otherwise, MU/TH/UR runs the show. ■

AFTER ACTION REPORT

It's a good idea to end the gaming session with a mission finale and pick up the next session with the PCs' debriefing. At first, it will be Lt. Casados that debriefs the PCs. After a few missions, the PCs may be asked to report to General Vaughn or one of her officers. If so, Vaughn will gauge the PCs' knowledge and loyalty by questioning everything they saw and did during their missions. If they retrieved any xenobiological materials, recordings, genetic data, enemy prisoners, or anything damaging to the UPP, the General will commend them and offer them the chance to work directly for her.

If they fail to bring back the things she wants—even if they aren't explicitly part of their mission objectives—she will be livid. The PCs' next mission might just be a shit job in a hell hole (Dealer's Choice).

FIRST TIME OUT

When the PCs are assembled for their first mission, General Vaughn herself addresses the PCs alongside their immediate commanding officer, Lieutenant Casados.

"Fort Nebraska orphans—you are not alone. I am here before you because I also lost friends and family on Ariarcus. Like you, I want payback. I want the heads of the bastards who took out our home. And to get them, I need you. I need your guns, your fists, and your brains. When you are out there, find me evidence that the UPP is responsible for these Border Bombings. You see something that don't look quite right, bring it home to me. Find me anything we can use to get Secretary Cruz to say yes to kicking Union asses way back over the Borderline."

RELATIONSHIP TO VAUGHN

The PCs will be repeatedly exposed to misinformation, misdirection, and false pretenses. Their actions as they uncover details about Deep Void will dictate how the Campaign progresses. They may grow concerned about the USCMC's role in the Frontier War. If they choose to discuss this with their CO, Lieutenant Casados will be on their side. Unfortunately, she will bring it to the attention of her superiors—who report directly to General Vaughn. This can lead to Cassados' death and replacement by an officer loyal to Deep Void.

There are two obvious paths the PCs might take—working against Vaughn or for her:

- **PROTECT AND SERVE:** If the PCs begin to work at odds with Deep Void, Vaughn will disassociate herself from them. Repair requisitions for the Tamb'Itam and her equipment will be put on the back burner, causing the PCs to have to go into battle at less than full strength. Blackguard commandos encountered will treat them with contempt.

  Eventually the PCs will be brought before Secretary of Defense De La Cruz herself. Cruz will tell the PCs that she suspects Vaughn and several other officers are misappropriating USCMC assets to fund and protect a covert organization within their ranks. Cruz may ask the PCs to get on Vaughn's good side and find out what she is after.
- **EXECUTE ORDERS:** If the PCs remain loyal to Vaughn, (or pretend to) they will be rewarded with promotions and special incentives. Lt. Casados will suddenly be absent from their briefings, and the PCs will begin to report directly to General Vaughn herself. At that point, Vaughn might assign the PCs to Special Operations Command so they may operate autonomously without immediate oversight.

  The PCs would be equipped with their own Mantis Multimission Transport instead of the *Tamb'Itam*. Called the UAS Fresleven (but may be renamed by the PCs), this "War-Mantis" variant would essentially be a V-10A1113 equipped with an experimental gravity drive (page 152 of the core rulebook) and an FTL rating of 3.

  The PCs may still be approached by Secretary of Defense De La Cruz (see Protect and Serve). They may then choose to go against xVaughn—but it's also possible they will betray Cruz. If the PCs are still reporting directly to General Vaughn by the time she is ready to assault Lamont Station Prime, she may ask them to participate in the coup attempt!

A NOTE FROM MU/TH/UR: If Vaughn discovers the PCs are flat out working against her, she can order their ship's MU/TH/UR to disengage its coolant tanks—building towards an overload that will self-destruct in ten minutes (two Turns). Either a successful COMTECH roll to purge MU/TH/UR's orders or a HEAVY MACHINERY roll to sever her connection to the reactor will stop the countdown within the first five minutes (one Turn). After that, the countdown is irreversible. The PCs will need to evacuate the ship. ■

THE METAPUZZLE

Each mission has its own "Metapuzzle Pieces" section that describes where the PCs can find relevant Metapuzzle information. Because the missions are designed to be played in any order, these sections do not detail what that specific information will be. As the campaign develops, the information the PCs unearth is delivered in a series of escalating realizations called Epiphanies.

Each Epiphany contains several points of interest, and multiple sources cited in each mission can deliver any point of any Epiphany. Parse out those points amongst relevant sources as befits the narrative. The PCs should discover at least one of these puzzle pieces during each mission.

- **FIRST EPIPHANY—BIOWEAPONS PROLIFERATION:** Fanatical cults like the Children of the Two Divines are seeking out biological weapons. Bioweapons are destroying colonies on the Frontier. The UPP is developing a biological warfare program that uses humans as hosts for vicious alien creatures. The names Life Force, Darkstar, Morana, and Berserker are somehow related.
- **SECOND EPIPHANY—THE UA ARE THE AGGRESSORS:** The UPP bioweapon program is called Darkstar. It was developed to counter a USCMC covert bioweapons project called Life Force. Life Force also uses humans as hosts for alien creatures. Darkstar is far behind in development—the UA started this. The USCMC is quietly unleashing them on UPP colony worlds. Someone in the UA government or UAAC command is responsible for greenlighting Life Force and starting this cold biological war.
- **THIRD EPIPHANY—THE MAN BEHIND THE CURTAIN:** Project Life Force is completely unsanctioned by the USCMC, UAAC, and the UA government—a group called Deep Void is responsible. They are a cabal of rogue military commanders, corporate execs, and high-level scientists out to make war for profit and power. Deep Void is embedded in UAAC Command and the Colonial Marines. No one in the USCMC can be trusted.
- **FOURTH EPIPHANY—ANCIENT SECRETS:** The Children of the Two Divines are looking for Engineer artifacts. They believe the artifacts will usher in the apocalypse. Deep Void wants the same artifacts. They believe the Engineers are the Border Bombers. These artifacts are the key to making more deadly bioweapons.
- **FIFTH EPIPHANY— MAKING MUSICAL MONSTERS:** The hieroglyphics on the Engineer artifacts are important. Translated, they look like musical notes. The musical notes are genetic markers for resequencing DNA. Some Engineer artifacts carry the black goo bioweapon. Deep Void cannot use the genetic instructions without the black goo.
- **SIXTH EPIPHANY—THE INSTIGATORS OF FULL-SCALE WAR:** Deep Void is run by General Vaughn. She is staging a coup—she plans to assassinate the Secretary of Defense, frame the UPP, assume control of the military, and start a full-on war with the UPP. Vaughn will use bioweapons and a stolen UPP Destroyer to attack the Secretary and her advisors at Lamont Station Prime. UAAC Command must be warned.

EXAMPLE

In Operation Arcturian Apocalypse, the PCs might learn a Metapuzzle Epiphany from the xenoarchaeologist, her P-DAT, the modulating computing device, the android Mishka, or the Blackguard.

If Arcturian Apocalypse is the PCs' first mission, they may discover the P-DAT carries information about UPP bioweapons programs, the Children of the Two Divines bioterrorism, and the name "Life Force" (the First Epiphany). What exactly that has to do with the Engineer temple and artifacts may or may not be revealed.

If this mission is played third, the PCs have already learned the first Epiphany, so the P-DAT instead reveals that Engineer artifacts hold the secret to genetic manipulation (the Third Epiphany).

This continues until the PCs have gone on as many missions as needed to experience the six Epiphanies. ■

MISSIONS

During the course of the campaign, the PCs will be sent on a range of Colonial Marines missions. The seven operations fleshed out in this book are all linked to the Frontier War metaplot in one way or another, and will reveal different pieces of the puzzle to the players.

These missions can be played in any order, save for Operation Octopus Garden. Intended as the campaign finale, this operation comes into play after the PCs have unlocked the Sixth Epiphany.

Between these missions, the PCs will have downtime and can also be sent on other, unrelated, missions as well as side missions described in boxed texts in this chapter. These are optional bonus springboards for additional operations you may want to develop yourself. You can weave them throughout the main narrative of the Frontier War or use them on their own. The six core missions and the campaign finale are summarized below.

1. OPERATION BLAZE OF GLORY

On the jungle moon of O'Bannon's World, the PCs are sent to rescue survivors of a crashed hospital ship carrying Fort Nebraska survivors—or so they are told. In reality, their mission is to find a UPP ship and retrieve its flight recorder and surviving cryosleeper Xenomorph hosts before the UPP does. But what does the USCMC want these Xeno-hosts for, and why do they want them alive?

SIDE MISSION: PERCHANCE TO DREAM

While on another mission on a war-torn neutral Borderline colony, the PCs are waylaid by a UPP MSS platoon. The MSS has a Darkstar Program lab hidden here—a lab that has a problem—their android Mishka (page 214)—who they have used to read the Queen's dreams—has gone rogue. Any human subjects who have used the Neuro Visor link to their captured slumbering Queen have suffered irreversible cerebral damage (see Project Morana on page 174). Mishka's motives will be unclear to the PCs. Is she defecting to the UA or is the Queen somehow controlling her? If cornered she will surrender, tell them what they want to hear, and attempt to slip away from them as soon as they are distracted (she's off to join the Children of the Two Divines).

With Mishka gone and no other synthetics on the beleaguered colony, UPPA troops assigned to the Darkstar lab may attempt to abduct the PCs' android as a replacement. The PCs can use their android's PDT to trace them back to the lab—and the Xeno brood hibernating there.

A NOTE FROM MU/TH/UR: If the Perchance to Dream side mission is used after Operations Arcturan Apocalypse and/or Dreamcatcher, simply swap out Mishka for another android. ■

2. OPERATION ARCTURIAN APOCALYPSE

The PCs respond to a terrorist threat by a cult of Engineer worshippers on Arcturus—the Children of the Two Divines. They have found a hidden ancient temple with hieroglyphics containing important information—musical notes with instructions on resequencing alien DNA. But Deep Void is running the show, and are more interested in the cult leader and scans of the temple than saving lives.

SIDE MISSION: ASSAULT ON THE KREMLIN

The PCs stumble upon the SSV *Võ Nguyên Giáp*—a damaged Kremlin class destroyer that has had an accident while transporting massive cargo tanks full of Neomorphic motes (see pages 294–296 of the core rulebook). Perhaps it's the ship that was hunting them over O'Bannon's World, damaged by their fight with it. Maybe it was attempting to rescue Colonel Doctor Balázs from Corinth Colony, or maybe it just strayed into UA space too close to the border.

Regardless, the PCs are ordered to board the *Nguyên* and secure her for the USCMC. The tanks have cracked in battle, of course, and the ship is crawling with Neophytes and Neomorphs—but they're concentrated in one of the midsection cargo holds that can be manually ejected—if the PCs can make it into the heart of that mote infested area. The surviving UPPA crew will surrender immediately to the USCMC in order to get off the ship alive. MSS members will need convincing. If the PCs succeed in securing this ship for General Vaughn, they will see it come into play during the Siege of Lamont Station Prime side mission.

3. OPERATION QUIET CATCH

A suspected bioweapons testing facility on the UPP side of the border has suffered a catastrophic accident. Could they be behind the Border Bombings? The PCs and a Weyland-Yutani biodefense virologist are sent in as a cleanup crew—with instructions to retrieve any data on the weapon and get out before UPP forces arrive. But the PCs arrive to find the nearby colony has been nuked. The test facility didn't have an accident—it was deliberately infected with a new type of Xenomorph by forces within the USCMC itself.

SIDE MISSION:
THE LAST OUTPOST

A Network satellite hub has inadvertently intercepted top secret USCMC information, and the PCs are sent to retrieve the data and trace the leak. But W-Y Commandos have been dispatched by Deep Void to silence the satellite hub, so the PCs need to act fast. The intercepted message is up to the GM—it could have nothing to do with the main campaign, it could be a song, or it could be an encrypted message detailing General Vaughn's plan to seize control of the UAAC.

4. OPERATION GO FISH

The UPP are invading the independent Anesidora Colony, searching for rogue UA scientists with vital information that can turn the tide of the Frontier War. The PCs are sent to both retrieve these specialists and defend the colony's last viable spaceport, allowing colonists time to escape. But other USCMC forces are on site, working against the PCs with murderous intent. Where are the missing scientists, and why are they so important to the USCMC and the UPP?

SIDE MISSION:
THE GHOST FLEET OF 61 CYGNI

When the Frontier War began, a combined fleet of USCMC and Outer Rim Defense Fleet ships carrying thousands of marines was sent to LV-038 in the 61 Cygni system—never to be seen again. While it is believed the fleet was destroyed by the Border Bombers, there are reports of unidentified frigates that appear at outback colonies just long enough to drive marauders away before going FTL once more.

When the Conestoga class USS *Nan-Shan* appears operational but crewless on the Frontier, the PCs are dispatched to investigate. Part of the 61 Cygni task force, the *Nan-Shan* belonged to the fabled USCMC 5th Division Spec-Ops team "Sin Eaters." Was the crew abducted in hypersleep? Is the ship a UPP trap, or is something more ominous going on? There is evidence of a firefight in the engine room, and a darkened spot on the hull—a spot that seems to be growing fast.

5. OPERATION DREAMCATCHER

The inhabitants of two remote colonies near the Borderline Region have been experiencing disturbing nightmares—nightmares that turn people violent. An entire colony and the crew of at least one ship have reportedly killed each other and themselves. When a wave pattern is determined to be the cause, the source of the signals is triangulated—a decommissioned NC4 Network station. The PCs are dispatched to gather intelligence and destroy the installation. The MSS is transmitting the hellish dreams of a sleeping Xenomorph Queen, and if that wasn't bad enough, extremists from the Children of the Two Divines have come to rescue her.

SIDE MISSION: BERSERKER DOWN

A remote colonial outpost has been black-bombed and is now overrun with Anathemas. Crucial data is stored at the facility and must be retrieved at all costs. The PCs' team is given a new member/asset: a Berserker MOX marine to clear a path to the data center for them. When activated, the operator suffers a coronary. Command orders the marines to pick a volunteer replacement to complete the mission. If none of the PCs want to join with the suit—and they want to complete the mission—they'll have to get creative.

6. OPERATION DEEP SHAFT

The PCs lead a rescue effort to evacuate survivors from a mining accident on the Grandhi moon. It's what led to the accident that complicates matters—a cache of black goo accelerant steatite ampules has been unearthed and infected several miners. But the Anathemas now wandering the tunnels are not the only threat, as religious fanatics and a team of commandos all rush to claim the find as their own.

SIDE MISSION:
SIEGE OF LAMONT STATION PRIME

The Frontier War is designed so that the PCs can beat General Vaughn by making the UAAC aware of her intended coup. If you like, however, the PCs can try to stop General Vaughn's attempted assassination of the Secretary of Defense themselves.

As Vaughn's Blackguard uses a stolen Kremlin class destroyer to attack Crestus Garrison System Prime, her agents onboard Lamont Station have already secluded themselves in the station's air ducts and birthed Chestbursters—releasing two dozen Biodrones aboard.

The PCs have a few options. They may choose to commandeer their vessel and face the Kremlin in space combat. If they decide to lead an assault party aboard the purloined destroyer, they will find the ship's holds full of adult Biodrones ready to be unleashed on Safe Haven Colony.

Your PCs may board the station in an effort to get the Secretary of Defense and the UAAC command council to safety. While responsible for this mayhem, General Vaughn will not accompany the attack. If the coup fails and she is exposed, Vaughn will go into hiding (see Operation Octopus Garden).

7. OPERATION OCTOPUS GARDEN

This volcanic island on Anesidora Colony is a Deep Void safehouse and home to Project Life Force. The PCs are ordered to take General Vaughn and all Deep Void leaders into custody for trial. But Vaughn has released her Xenomorph hive and turned the island into a deathtrap. The Children of the Two Divines have come for Vaughn's Engineer data, and they intend to use it to create a new world. ■

DEEP VOID

Calling themselves Deep Void, this covert organization is a cabal of high echelon military officers, corporate executives, and scientists working independently of their respective organizations to develop a viable bioweapons program from the xenobiological properties of *Plagiarus praepotens* and Chemical Accelerant A0-3959X.91 – 15.

DISPOSITION

No one outside of Deep Void knows anything for certain about them. Their alleged origin goes back as far as the early 2100s, when something called the David Transmissions were intercepted by the USCMC Tamburro Station listening post. Intended for Weyland-Yutani, these messages contained corrupted and incomplete bioweapon instructions and led to an unofficial arrangement between Weyland-Yutani, Hyperdyne Corporation, and the Colonial Marines. Ever since then, they've been searching for the missing parts of the equation.

By the 2180s, Deep Void is believed to be headed by Assistant Commandant of the USCMC General Vaughn, USCMC Colonel Meyers, Weyland-Yutani and Hyperdyne Corporation execs Ms. Eckford (see *Destroyer of Worlds*), Mr. Lyndon (page 344), Mr. Ganon (page 225), and former Gelholgod Science Institute director Dr. Nl Babak (page 202). It is possible, however, that Deep Void has another circle of members operating above Vaughn in complete secrecy.

Deep Void's activities are completely unauthorized—its cabal of leaders are operating without the consent of their respective organizations. While resources are being consumed under the guise of official black projects, no corporation and government has sanctioned Deep Void or its black ops and biological weapons programs.

GENERAL DELYLA S. VAUGHN

ASSISTANT COMMANDANT OF THE UNITED STATES COLONIAL MARINE CORPS.

A Four Star General and second-in-command of the USCMC, Vaughn is tired of playing games of punch and counterpunch with the UPP. A colonel during the Arcturian Conflicts, Dog War, and Tientsin Campaign, Vaughn was furious with UAAC high command when they stopped advancing on the UPP in 2163. Just like the CANC had to go, she wants the UPP crushed under her heel—and if Allied Command won't greenlight it, she sees only one option—seize control herself.

Vaughn makes use of an experimental gravity drive-equipped Mantis-class stealth ship called the USS *Black Bart* (FTL 3). Vaughn's known for some time that her superior, USCMC Commandant General Dellamarggio, has to die. He's brazen, incompetent, and she knows she's the better choice to lead the USCMC. She had hoped that only he had to die, but if the rest of the UAAC Command—and their families—need to go with him, that's fine with her.

STRENGTH 3, AGILITY 3, WITS 4, EMPATHY 4

HEALTH: 5

SKILLS: Close Combat 1, Mobility 2, Ranged Weapons 2, Command 4, Manipulation 3

TALENTS: Tough, Field Commander, Merciless

GEAR: VP70 pistol, BiMex sunglasses, pack of Balaji Imperial cigarettes, Command P-DAT, plus TX-9 pistol with vials of 26 Draconis, Sweet Dreams, Rhodes Vaccine, and CN-20 nerve agent. If she's going into combat, she'll have M3 Armor and an M41A as well.

A NOTE FROM MU/TH/UR: General Vaughn is Deep Void. While the PCs will start off working for her, they risk becoming her enemy by the end of the campaign. The PCs will be ordered to hunt her down and return her alive for questioning in Operation Octopus Garden. ■

OBJECTIVES

Deep Void wants full military and economic dominance of the Frontier and therefore seeks to eliminate the national and corporate competitors of its members. General Vaughn and her USCMC associates want a decisive war with the UPP. Vaughn believes the only way to win the arms race is to create programmable apex predators—and she wants the UA to possess the most devastating biological weapons possible. Vaughn's Weyland-Yutani and Hyperdyne partners work for Deep Void behind the backs of their respective companies for one reason only—money. They want to be the ones to secure the wide-sweeping government defense contracts that war with the UPP will bring.

LOCATIONS

As second in command of the USCMC, General Vaughn operates out of Garrison System Alpha in the Crestus Prime Cluster. She has the many bases and resources of the Colonial Marines at her disposal. Hyperdyne's Berserker cybernetic centers and Weyland-Yutani's Life Force biodevelopment labs are both located in nearby Garrison System Gamma, on several USCMC bases across the Frontier (including the now destroyed Fort Nebraska), and on a small Weyland-Yutani owned volcanic island safehouse and laboratory near Anesidora colony on Pandora. It is here that Vaughn keeps her prized collection of Engineer artifacts, two Berserker fireteams, and her purebred alien hive.

SHOCK AND AWS

Vaughn's elite bodyguard/commando forces are called the Blackguard. An entire company of genetically modified Artificial Womb Soldiers (page 164), these living weapons are completely loyal to the general.

Vaughn picked the Blackguard with reason. She believes in perfection—and genetic manipulation of living things is the true way to create the perfect organism. Machines are tools that are only necessary to accomplish what we cannot biologically perform on our own—yet. To her, the AW Soldiers are only a first step—she envisions a future of commandos who can survive in the vacuum of space and dominate any environment without technological support.

This is what attracted her to the Project Life Force weaponization project—crafting living things into the ultimate weapon.

DR. NL BABAK

LEAD XENOMORPHOLOGIST OF PROJECT LIFE FORCE, WEYLAND-YUTANI BIOWEAPONS DIVISION

A biodefense virologist and the former Associate Director of Xenobiology at the Geholgod Science Institute with degrees in biochemistry, genetics, and medicine, Dr. Babak is unique at Deep Void—he's a pure scientist without any corporate or military ambitions of his own. He has risen through the ranks at Weyland-Yutani alongside whichever XO he has developed projects for simply because he is a seeker of knowledge without any scruples over moral ramifications.

Babak knows he could be making money on patents if he went into the private sector, but he'd rather have access to the advanced conundrums and equipment that the company—and now Deep Void—have to offer. Science is science—he wants to understand everything and is willing to do anything to gain that knowledge. It's precisely this attitude that makes him the perfect lead scientist for Project Life Force. The loss of Fort Nebraska's research was a mighty blow to Babak—he had planned on visiting the site to check on Ms. Eckford's team before the border bombings occurred. The Biodrones are his babies, and he will be crushed to learn they have adapted past the imposed biological expiration date he created.

Privy to restricted information gathered by the institute concerning P. praepotens, Babak was able to synthesize a variant of Rhodes Vaccine—a masking agent that temporarily makes Xenomorph XX121 ignore those inoculated (page 204). He keeps several doses on him.

STRENGTH 2, AGILITY 3, WITS 5, EMPATHY 4

HEALTH: 2

SKILLS: Mobility 1, Observation 4, Comtech 3, Medical Aid 4

TALENTS: Field Surgeon, Analysis

GEAR: Hazmat suit, kevlar vest, combined CBNR and surgeons kit, P-DAT, syringe set, six doses of Rhodes Vaccine, and a U4 firebomb hidden in his waistline—insurance against his more troublesome creations.

A NOTE FROM MU/TH/UR: Babak will accompany the PCs on Operation Quiet Catch and can be encountered anywhere that General Vaughn is. ■

THE GEHOLGOD INSTITUTE

A prestigious international research institution that focuses on higher scientific principles, the Geholgod is a gathering of leading minds from all supernations. The Institute has a keen interest in both exolife and humanity's possible extraterrestrial origins. They have been aware of the existence of the Engineers since the late 2090s. Deep Void mined Geholgod for its experts, and the PCs will encounter them on their missions. These xenobiology and xenoanthropology specialists include xenomorphologist Dr Nl Babak, xenoarcheologist Tejal Ahluwalia (page 259), xenolinguist Dr. Deol Chawla, xenoethnomusicologist Dr. Velma Liu (both on page 282), and their android research assistant, Maitland (page 215).

OPERATIONS

During the course of the campaign, Deep Void can carry out the following operations, which may or may not directly affect the PCs:

- After years of experimentation, Deep Void's black projects bear fruit. Project Life Force creates several weaponized Xenomorph XX121 variants. Their Berserker Program turns human beings into maniacal murder machines (see Chapter 6 for both).
- Deep Void stages an attack and captures a UPP Destroyer (see the side mission Assault on the Kremlin, page 196).
- Discovering hidden genetic marker codes in Engineer hieroglyphs, Deep Void seeks out ancient Engineer artifacts and pathogens so as to decode them and build better monsters. Colonial settlements in their way are destroyed (see Operation Arcturian Apocalypse).
- Deep Void seeds weaponized Xenomorph infestations on Borderline Region colonies, accusing the UPP of bioweapon accidents and flagrant attacks on independent worlds. They push the UA towards all-out war (see Operation Quiet Catch).
- Using a stolen UPP Destroyer, Deep Void attempts to assassinate the leaders of the United Americas Allied Command and assume control of the UA military (see the Siege of Lamont Station Prime side mission on page 199). ■

ARCTURIAN SWEET DREAMS™

Derived from Arcturian hallucinogenic mushrooms, Sweet Dreams is a pleasure drug that causes you to see what you really want to see. Take it and people around you will melt and change into others. Exposure to these mushrooms originally made humanity think that the Arcturians were shapeshifters of some kind. Sweet Dreams are sometimes used by intelligence personnel to gather information by convincing someone they are confiding in a friend or lover.

A NOTE FROM MU/TH/UR: While it's not exactly illegal, the drug is restricted, very expensive, and can get you into a lot of trouble. Just be careful when huffin' these things—that poodle just might be a giant cockroach and that colonist's cute daughter just might be that burly grunt you owe $100 W-Y bucks to. ■

RHODES VACCINE

A bioagent originally conceived by a Dr. Rhodes under the Geholgod Institute founding member Dr. Lucien Keitel, Rhodes Vaccine temporarily provides protection against Xenomorph XX121. The vaccine tricks a Xenomorph into believing an inoculated person to already be impregnated with a Chestburster. Extremely difficult to synthesize, the vaccine is kept in protective storage on Darwin Island. Only Dr. Babak and General Vaughn herself have access to it.

A NOTE FROM MU/TH/UR: Once administered via syringe or TX-9 Air Injection Pistol, Rhodes Vaccine takes D6 Rounds to kick in. All forms of Xenomorph XX121 will leer over and then ignore the vaccine's recipient as long as that person does not attack them.

If a Rhodes Vaccine recipient does attack a Xeno, the alien will seek to subdue rather than hurt them. Xenomorph XX121 won't risk their own young. Rather than see the recipient's alleged Chestburster endangered by its host's reckless behavior, the Xeno will attempt to abduct and then cocoon them.

The effects of the Rhodes Vaccine last for up to one Shift and will wear off at a dramatically (in)appropriate time. As the vaccine utilizes elements of Agent AD-3959X.91 - 15, multiple injections within 24 hours runs the risk of transforming the recipient into an Anathema (Dealer's Choice). ■

UNITED AMERICAN ALLIED COMMAND

The United American Allied Command is the leadership of the combined armed strength of the entire Americas. Operating out of Garrison Prime in the Crestus Prime Cluster, the UAAC is responsible for the defense of the American Arm of space and all United American colonies.

DISPOSITION

Led by Secretary of Defense Joëlle De La Cruz, the UAAC is a thinktank of high-level admirals and generals, including Commandant General D. Dellamarggio of the United States Colonial Marine Corps (USCMC), Commandant de l'Armée Générale F. Couture of the Canadian Colonial Armed Forces (CCAF), Chief of Naval Operations Marechal-do-ar E. Lurdes of the Latin American Colonial Navy (LACN), Chief of Staff General A. Abbas of the United States AeroSpace Force (USASF), and Chief of Space Operations Admiral H. Palakiko of the United Americas Outer Rim Defense Fleet (UAORDF). While each of these branches works independently of one other, together they strategize, coordinate, and execute all major combat offensives.

ALMIRANTE DE LA FLOTA JOËLLE DE LA CRUZ

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE, UNITED AMERICAS ALLIED COMMAND

Formerly of the Latin American Colonial Navy, Almirante De La Flota (Fleet Admiral) Joëlle De La Cruz has been the UA Secretary of Defense for the past two years. After successfully reorganizing the LACN, De La Cruz made evaluating the usefulness of aging ORDF her first task as Secretary of Defense. Originally planning to dismantle the fleet, the Almirante now sees the ORDF as a symbol of unity for the UA armed forces and intends to restore it. De La Cruz believes that the military might of the UA should not fall on individual member states, but instead be presented as a unified front. If she has her way, the next five years will see the USCMC become the United Americas Colonial Marines.

De La Cruz often challenges Vaughn's excessive military spending, something the general does not appreciate. Concerned that Vaughn might be willing to instigate open hostilities with the UPP, the Almirante has been building up the ORDF in secret. With the loss of several fleets in the Border Bombings, her prudence has paid off. She commands and travels on the UAS *Montevideo*.

STRENGTH 3, AGILITY 3, WITS 4, EMPATHY 4

HEALTH: 3

SKILLS: Close Combat 2, Ranged Combat 2, Command 5, Manipulation 3

TALENTS: Field Commander, Heavy Weapons

GEAR: VP70 pistol, P-DAT, command level ID Key "Dog Tags."

A NOTE FROM MU/TH/UR: The PCs can gain the attention of Almirante De La Cruz as they become more aware of the Deep Void threat. If the PCs go toe-to-toe with General Vaughn, De La Cruz can be a powerful ally. She is the focus of a Deep Void assassination attempt in the side mission Siege of Lamont Station Prime. ■

OBJECTIVES

Protect the colonies of the American Arm. The UAAC has put the majority of its strength into the USCMC for decades now. Unaware that Assistant Commandant of the USCMC General Delyla Vaughn and Deep Void have been conducting illegal bioweapons research in their name, they are ready to go to war with the UPP to protect the colonies.

LOCATIONS

The UAAC only has one base dedicated to it, and that is Garrison Prime. While all other UA military bases belong to one branch of the military or the other, they all have accommodations for UAAC command if they need to set up a temporary HQ there. More often than not, the UAAC coordinates missions in the field from the ORDF flagship, the UAS *Montevideo*.

OPERATIONS

During the course of the campaign, the UAAC can carry out the following operations, which may or may not directly affect the PCs:

- Deploy frigates and transports along the Borderline Region to track UPP fleet movements.
- Send a hostage team to liberate the Arcturian Kivas settlement from a fanatical extremist group (see Operation Arcturian Apocalypse).
- Locate and eliminate a UPP psychological experiment causing chaos on the Frontier (see Operation Dreamcatcher).
- Delay UPP invasion forces on the Anesidora colony so that colonists can escape via the last viable spaceport (see Operation Go Fish).
- Dispatch a rescue team to free trapped miners on the Grandhi Domes moon colony (see Operation Deep Shaft).
- Assault Deep Void's lab facility on Darwin Island to destroy the assets there and bring General Vaughn in alive (see Operation Octopus Garden). ■

THE PEOPLE'S ARMED FORCES

The military might of the Union of Progressive Peoples, the People's Armed Forces are composed of thirty three different regional navies and individual state armies from Russia, China, Germany, Spain, Vietnam, and more—all sharing limited resources in a relatively barren area of space.

DISPOSITION

The backbone of the socialist supernation is their Union of Progressive Peoples' Army (UPPA)—a fighting force that makes up for its lack of prowess with its impressive numbers. The elite commandos of the Union, however, are the Space Operating Forces (SOF). Consisting of the best soldiers and pilots from all thirty three sector-states, the SOF maintains its own fleets, ground troops, and aerospace fighters. Just as important as the SOF is the Ministry of Space Security (MSS), who keep the people in step, gather intelligence, and run special military projects.

OBJECTIVES

The UPP is starving. Out of resources and out of options, they are forced to expand into the Frontier and push against UA and 3WE space. The SOF are the dedicated protectors of the Union, and as such they are at the vanguard of this expansion force. They answer to the MSS and will defend their borders to the death. Through spies within Weyland-Yutani, the MSS has procured their own samples of P. praepotens, and through the Darkstar Program (page 172), the MSS are working to weaponize it before the Americans do.

COMMANDANT Võ/Vũ

COMMANDO PLATOON LEADER, SPACE OPERATING FORCES

Preferring to go by the name Võ/Vũ (pronounced voo voo), the Commandant is head of the security detail assigned to Colonel Doctor Balázs's Darkstar Program. Võ/Vũ was a young girl when the Dog War pushed her and her family out of their homes to retreat into UPP space—and for that she will be hard pressed to trust any United American she encounters. Also an accomplished pilot, Võ/Vũ is a cold but efficient soldier who kills only when necessary.

STRENGTH 4, AGILITY 4, WITS 3, EMPATHY 3

HEALTH: 6

SKILLS: Close Combat 4, Mobility 2, Ranged Combat 4, Command 2

TALENTS: Zero G Training, Tough, Heavy Weapons

GEAR: CCC5 Compression Suit, AK-104 Suit Gun, QSZ-203 Pistol, flashlight, electroshock four grenades, combat knife.

A NOTE FROM MU/TH/UR: In the Frontier War Campaign, Võ/Vũ can be found on the Võ Nguyên Giáp over O'Bannon's World, protecting the Talos Network Station, or anywhere the UPP military is in force. ■

LOCATIONS

The UPP has an MSS laboratory and combat android facility on Corinth Colony, as well as a bioweapon black site on O'Bannon's World. MSS agents are interested in Anesidora Colony, investigating exactly what kind of bio research is being done there. Finally, several airless moons within the Borderline Region are suspected of being MSS controlled "Heomopf" farms for cultivating Neomorphic egg sacs (see page 293 of the core rulebook). A full UPP Fleet patrols the edge of the Borderline Region at all times, and New Kiev is the region's military base.

THE DAVYDOVICH PROGRAM

Recently, the UPP uncovered large caches of previously recalled Weyland-type David 5 and 7 units in cold storage on Corinth Colony. The MSS repurposed the 5s for psychological warfare and the 7s as combat synthetics. The models were redesignated Phyat and Syem Davydovich respectively, and distributed across the Frontier to assist all MSS, SOF, and UPPA forces.

As with all UPP androids, they have no rights under UPP law. Both their minds and bodies are a bit unstable— the David 5 and 7 models were recalled for psychopathic behavior, and all UPP androids are equipped with substandard joints. The Davydovich models must be particularly careful about lifting too much weight or jumping from too high, lest they snap a limb or two (page 221).

OPERATIONS

During the course of the campaign, the UPP can carry out the following operations, which may or may not directly affect the PCs:

- The UPP begins annexing colony worlds on the Frontier whose loyalty to the UA is in question. The 61 Cygni (LV-038) and Kruger 60 (Ariarcus) systems are the first to be invaded (see *Destroyer of Worlds*).
- In an arms race against Deep Void's Project Life Force, the UPP initiates the Darkstar Program to create xenobiological weapons (see page 172 and Operation Quiet Catch).
- MSS agents move to steal the genetic blueprint for Deep Void's Biodrone Xenomorph (see Operation Blaze of Glory).
- The UPP invades Anesidora colony to secure an informant who could expose Deep Void (see Operation Go Fish).
- Darkstar initiates a psychological terror program called Project Morana (see Operation Dreamcatcher). ■

COLONEL DOCTOR BÉLA BALÁZS

UPP ASSOCIATE MINISTER OF SPACE SECURITY, DARKSTAR PROGRAM, BORDERLINE REGION

Colonel Doctor Balázs is a man of many talents—talents many would call sadistic and cruel. He would call them necessary evils. A xenobiologist and intelligence officer, Balázs is capable of wielding a scalpel to both save lives and torture them to death, as the need arises. Responsible for the Darkstar Program, he has created ghoulish monstrosities in the name of science. Balázs sees where this bio-arms race is going, and how it could escalate out of control very quickly. Still, he believes in his nation and simply cannot allow their capitalist enemies to unleash these horrors on the Union. Balázs hopes that if both sides develop the same level of biotechnology, that will ensure neither of them ever use it.

STRENGTH 3, AGILITY 3, WITS 4, EMPATHY 4

HEALTH: 3

SKILLS: Close Combat 2, Ranged Combat 3, Observation 3, Command 1, Manipulation 3

TALENTS: Influence, Stealthy

GEAR: QSZ-203 semi-automatic pistol, two grenades, folding knife, P-DAT.

A WORD ABOUT THE CHURCH OF IMMACULATE INCUBATION

The Church of the Immaculate Incubation is a growing evangelistic group who broadcasts their sermons through the network when they can afford to—and when those broadcasts don't get blocked by Weyland-Yutani for reading from banned material. Not quite a church but more than a cult, they have rallied behind the night-marish dreams of their seers and Robert Morse's banned book to await the coming of the so-called Space Beast—an instrument of God sent to judge mankind and, through his gifts, allow his followers to be reborn in his image.

While the church does have its roots in a revived remnant of the Earth Savers, they are essentially apocalyptic dreamers who want to make sure their souls are in order before the "Space Beast" comes to judge them. At the end of the day, the church is made up of regular colonists just looking for something to believe in these dark times. Like every religion, however, there are fanatics who have an extreme interpretation of their faith. Enter the Children of the Two Divines.

CHILDREN OF THE TWO DIVINES

"No one understands the lonely perfection of my dreams."

—DAVID 8

A terrorist off-shoot of the Church of the Immaculate Incubation, the Children of the Two Divines not only believe the apocalypse is coming, but that it is their duty to usher it in. The two divines referred to in their name are the gods—*Homo Genitor*—and their Destroying Angels—*Plagiarus praepotens*. In short, the Children worship the Engineers and the Xenomorphs. Led by Grand Seer Jannes Ruedi, the cult is actively seeking Xenomorph XX121 eggs with the intent of seeding them across the Frontier.

Jannes' mission is to fulfill the prophecy of long dead apocalyptic prophet Duncan Fields—that humanity's death would be amongst the stars.

But while the mantra of Duncan's Earthsavers cult was "out there be demons," Jannes' Children embrace that horror and preach, "inside us be angels."

DISPOSITION

While they also adhere to Robert Morse's book, the Children of the Two Divines have ironically embraced scientific works as their supplemental doctrine. The works of Drs. Charles Holloway, Elizabeth Shaw, and Lucien Keitel have been cited by the cult as proof not only of the Space Beast being the Destroying Angel the Church believes it is, but also the existence of God—or in this case, Gods.

Over the past century, the predominant papers on humanity's extraterrestrial origins were written and recorded by Drs. Charles Holloway, Elizabeth Shaw, and Lucien Keitel. The Children believe that the mysterious Engineers that Holloway and Shaw wrote about created mankind and found us lacking—and have sent Keitel's xenomorphic Destroying Angels to judge us.

As the extraterrestrial beings they worship do not reproduce through normal sexual means, Grand Seer Jannes Ruedi requires all male members of the group—save for himself—to be neutered as a show of faith. Conversely, the fertility of the cult's women is celebrated. Women leaders of the Children are awarded the title of Queen and given command of terrorist cells called Hives. These cells are further broken down into rank-and-file Children, initiates called Newborns, and the elite Firstborn.

Jannes has a top queen who executes all his commands. Only known as Mishka—she has been afforded the title of Mother. Jannes is unaware that Mishka is a former UPP android with her own agenda. The Children aren't afraid to take extreme action, including suicide attacks, kidnappings, bioterrorism, and mass murder. They have used Arcturian Klerhaige, XMB, and CN-20 Nerve Agent in biological and chemical attacks on small Frontier colonies. The Children are typically armed with black market F903WE assault rifles.

GRAND SEER JANNES RUEDI FIELDS

DOOMSDAY EVANGELIST, CHILDREN OF TWO DIVINES

Jannes is a masterful dreamer of the macabre—his vivid night terrors are the stuff of, well, nightmares. When he was young, Jannes made waves as a professional dreamer—his then vibrant and poetic dreams were recorded and played back for less skilled dreamers to enjoy in their cryosleep. His nightly narratives were in such demand that the company routinely paid to send him to new colonies for inspiration. On his way to Alpha Boötis just as the Arcturian Conflicts erupted, Jannes' commercial liner decelerated from FTL into the middle of the pitched battle around that system. His ship was hit, his stasis chamber damaged, and he suffered severe head trauma. After that, his dreams turned dark—and while there was still some interest, not many people want to spend their time in cryosleep dreaming endless nightmares.

Jannes disappeared from public view for nearly two decades, eventually finding his place in the Church of Immaculate Incubation—where nightmares were the stuff of godliness. His apocalyptic dreams were shared with churchgoers during their travels to other colonies, and soon he was elevated to a seer position. Jannes preached a more rigid interpretation of the Church's tenets, claiming that the only way for people to protect themselves from the Destroying Angels in his dreams was to usher in their coming and to take the angels into their hearts. He proved to be more commanding than the, at the time, current leaders, and soon created the Children of the Two Divines as a splinter group.

Jannes is the worst kind of dangerous—he's a fanatic who actually believes what he is preaching. Although he made no mention of it in his life before joining the Church, Jannes claims to be the illegitimate son of Duncan Fields—the infamous dream prophet of the Earth Savers Movement. As he was born in 2104, it is possible. While technically in his eighties, Jannes spent a good twenty years of that time in cryosleep, so he appears much younger.

STRENGTH 2, AGILITY 4, WITS 3, EMPATHY 5

HEALTH: 4

SKILLS: Piloting 2, Manipulation 4, Observation 3, Command 3

TALENTS: Watchful, Tough

GEAR: Belt of 20 M-40 grenades, X-Stims, F903WE assault rifle, pocket knife, razor blades in his shoe, Engineer flute (page 288 in the core rulebook).

"Those worthy of reincarnation will taste the kiss of the Destroying Angels and be reborn as angels themselves—heretics and non-believers will kiss them and taste only death."

—JANNES RUEDI

A NOTE FROM MU/TH/UR: Jannes will play a major part in Operation Arcturian Apocalypse. His homebase is on Grandhi Domes. ■

THE WORKS OF PROFESSORS HOLLOWAY, SHAW, AND KEITEL

"How Jannes and his kiddies got their hands on the Holloway and Shaw papers isn't that hard to figure out—Weyland himself may have paid to have all that crap suppressed before the Prometheus mission, but some of it was already published in crackpot scientific journals before he put a lid on it. Now, them quoting Professor Keitel's unethical experiments? The Geholgod Science Institute bought out the surviving witnesses and covered up that shit for fifty years now. The fact that they got Keitel's manifesto and the cult's recent leak of Peter Weyland's personal diaries makes it clear Jannes Ruedi's got someone on the inside at Geholgod."

—DIRECTOR P. O'NEIL, BUREAU OF COLONIAL MARSHALS

OBJECTIVES

The Children are hunting down any leads they can find on the location of alien eggs. They have recently taken a particular interest in Arcturus, making connections between the Arcturians' Star Teachers and Dr. Charles Holloway's Engineer thesis. Believing there to be some form of equation inscribed in the ancient Arcturian art, they are scouting the Guardian Belt for clues to the location of an Engineer temple, vessel, or outpost.

They are also aware that Deep Void and the major powers are experimenting with their angels, and hope to drive the UA, UPP, and Weyland-Yutani into unleashing the Xenomorphs on their own.

Shortly after the Border Bombings, Cult leader Jannes Ruedi released a statement taking credit for the attacks—claiming that he summoned the gods to shower his wrath on those worlds. The Colonial Marshal Bureau and the FBI have launched an investigation, but all evidence indicates the boast is an empty one—the cult just doesn't have the means necessary to cause such destruction. In fact—no one seems to.

LOCATIONS

The cult is recruiting all across the Frontier, and as such can be found on practically any world there. They own a small dome on Grandi Colony—something that the UA authorities have yet to discover. The compound there is armed, fortified, and protected by at least one surplus M22A3 Jackson Medium Tank—an extremely dangerous piece of equipment, especially if someone decides to fire its cannon at the dome itself. When not on a crusade, Jannes Ruedi will be found there, preaching to his dreamers.

The Children will use the tank as a threat to gain the upper hand in any homebase confrontation. Thing is, they aren't bluffing and will blow a hole through the dome—blowing everyone out into space—if their demands aren't met.

MOTHER MISHKA

WEYLAND-YUTANI AVA 8 SERIES
SYNTHETIC BIOTERRORIST LEADER,
CHILDREN OF THE TWO DIVINES

A secret synthetic, Mishka is a gifted orator and riotous instigator with the ability to rally lesser minds to her cause. She was originally a UPP android attached to Operation Morana (page 174). With a Xenomorph Queen's thoughts dancing in her head, Mishka met Maitland, went rogue, and joined the Children of the Two Divines. Pretending to be human, Mishka seduced Jannes Ruedi and told him of the Queen's quite literally alien dreams. She's actually been feeding the cult's concepts to him for some time now—all with the twin goals of discovering the final pieces of the Engineer puzzle and taking control of the Children.

STRENGTH 6, AGILITY 3, WITS 4, EMPATHY 7

HEALTH: 6

SKILLS: Mobility 4, Ranged Combat 3, Observation 2, Manipulation 5

TALENT: Take Control

GEAR: Belt of 20 M-40 grenades, black market F903WE assault rifle, pocket knife, two doses of Sweet Dreams, P-DAT with Neuro Visor (page 134 of the core rulebook).

SUBSTANDARD COMPONENTS: The UPP uses lower grade materials, meaning any critical injury on this model of synthetic always triggers two rolls on the Critical Injuries on Synthetics table on page 111 of the core rulebook. While Mishka suffers this defect, Maitland does not.

A NOTE FROM MU/TH/UR: Mishka is a major player in Operation Arcturian Apocalypse and Operation Dreamcatcher. ■

OPERATIONS

During the course of the campaign, the Children of the Two Divines can carry out the following operations, which may or may not directly affect the PCs:

- Recruit and brainwash colonists across the Frontier into their cult, building an army of extremists.
- Translate and decipher Engineer hieroglyphs in an effort to be closer to "their gods."
- Take hostages at the Arcturian Grand Kivas to distract from their search beneath it for Engineer artifacts (see Operation Arcturian Apocalypse).
- Attack a UPP facility to liberate a Xenomorph Queen (see Operation Dreamcatcher).
- Remove their leader Ruedi from power. Elevate Mishka to the position of Grand Mother and follow her and Maitland into unknown space to create a new world (see Artificial Agendas on page 188 and Operation Octopus Garden). ■

MAITLAND

HYPERDYNE SERIES 120A/3 SERIES SYNTHETIC XENOLINGUISTICS AND XENOETHNOMUSCOLOGICAL EXPERT

A quiet and unassuming android, Maitland's friendly demeanor belies his malevolent intellect. When the xenolinguistics and xenoethnomuscological experts that Project Life Force had employed turned up dead, the assumption was that Deep Void did it. They didn't—but Maitland did. Originally an archivist for the Geholgod Institute—Maitland digested all the information there was on the Shaw-Halloway and Keitel papers, destroying the works after committing them to memory. He studied the severely corrupted David transmissions and erased them. He then replaced everything with inaccurate forgeries. Programmed by the experts he killed, Maitland can decipher Engineer hieroglyphs. He acquires information and then destroys the source, making himself the only one with that knowledge. Loyal to only Mishka, Maitland is a hot potato that no faction can afford to let fall into another's hands.

STRENGTH 3, AGILITY 5, WITS 7, EMPATHY 5

HEALTH: 3

SKILLS: Close Combat 3, Comtech 2, Observation 4, Manipulation 5

TALENT: Analysis

GEAR: Weyland ES-4 Pistol, paper journal of handwritten Engineer hieroglyph musical notes with their partially deciphered genetic codes and stellar coordinates (he's written these out from memory).

A NOTE FROM MU/TH/UR: Maitland is the objective of Operation Go Fish and can easily become an asset of the PCs, filling in any metapuzzle pieces they are missing—as long as he believes it will serve his needs. Given some time, he can translate the Engineer's hieroglyphs, convert them into music, and decode the genetic markers (although he will feign ignorance on that part). Maitland always presents himself as pleasant and well meaning. Basically, he is all Bishop until he goes all-out Ash. ■

THE BORDER BOMBERS

"Because it's what I choose to believe."

—DR. ELIZABETH SHAW

There are several theories as to who is behind the border bombings—rival corporations, rogue nations—but the prevailing theory is that they are an enigmatic and ancient species known to humankind as the Engineers. These promethean beings once used biotechnology to terraform primordial worlds. The Engineers weaponized the black pathogen millennia ago—and may be the ones using it to destroy colony worlds along the Frontier.

DISPOSITION

The Prometheus Reports—encrypted signals sent back to earth from that ill-fated expedition of nearly a century ago—claim that humanity was derived from *Homo Genitor*—and if this is the case, then further DNA evidence would suggest the Arcturians were as well. Yet Dr. Shaw's final report indicated that the Engineers wanted to destroy humanity—that they were somehow disappointed in their creation and intended to wipe us out. The question is, why?

The Children of the Two Divines insist the Border Bombers are the Engineers and that their extremist group is acting as their agents. While it is unlikely Jannes and his cultists have come face-to-face with a living Engineer, some scientists have proposed that these beings may be capable of communication through the unconscious mind—sending messages that humanity—in this case the Children—could interpret through dreams. Of course, all this is conjecture. The Children have some very distinct ideas about the Engineers which can neither be verified nor disputed.

OBJECTIVES

Unclear. It's important to keep in mind that aside from some unsubstantiated sightings from unreliable sources, there is no evidence to suggest that the Engineers are even extant—but if they are responsible for the border bombings, these attacks are likely tied to the *P. praepotens* bioweapons development taking place on the targeted worlds. Based on Dr. Shaw's report, it's easy to extrapolate that the Engineers might not want humanity having living weapons of our own. Seeing humanity as beneath them, they are also likely to execute any attack with extreme prejudice and without announcement—something that fits the Border Bombers' profile.

A NOTE FROM MU/TH/UR: It's important that you never make it clear to the players whether the attackers are or are not the Engineers. There should always be an NPC who has some explanation of how it could be a UPP ship or some third party. The bombers are merciless and never reveal themselves. Your players should never have all the answers—the mystery is part of the terror and thrill of ALIEN. The Engineers are like gods—and like gods their actions, motives, and sometimes very existence should remain unfathomable. ■

LOCATIONS

If the Engineers are out there, it's not clear where. Starting with 61 Cygni, colonies on both sides of the UPP/UA border have been bombed into oblivion using the Chemical A0-3959X.91-15 pathogen. If the Engineers are the Border Bombers, any colony that Xenomorph XX121 or its variants appear on could be black bombed next. See the next page for the black bomb effects.

OPERATIONS

During the course of the campaign, the Border Bombers can carry out the following actions, which may or may not directly affect the PCs:

- Annihilate the 61 Cygni and Kruger 60 systems.
- Destroy entire fleets of starships while their crews are in cryosleep.
- Create terror by entering a system, setting off an EMP, hovering over a world as if to drop a black bomb, and then leaving abruptly.
- Take out any system where bioweapons derived from the genetic accelerant are being developed or deployed.

MODUS OPERANDI OF GENOCIDE

The Border Bombers are destroyers of worlds. They are never clearly seen—at least not by anyone who survives the attack. Any attempt to electronically capture evidence of their existence is always distorted by disruption fields. What is known is that the ships are large. They appear suddenly within a planet's atmosphere and emit an extremely powerful electromagnetic pulse that affects even the most shielded technologies. They then drop their deadly cargo and go to FTL speeds without ever even achieving orbit—something that no known human displacement drive is capable of accomplishing safely.

More so than any enemy occupation or approaching war fleet, colonists on the Frontier are terrified the Border Bombings are coming to their colony next. If you should choose to use them, the Border Bombers can show up at any time during any mission and royally fuck up the PCs' day. They immediately suffer +1 STRESS LEVEL each as the bombing commences.

Consult the Black Goo Bomb Range Chart below to determine the effect of strike, depending on the distance from the point of impact. The mutagenic pathogen will not fully dissipate until everything is dead or mutated into Anathemas (page 179). It's possible to survive in any range zone with full compression, vacuum, or HAZMAT gear. Basically, anything with an independent air supply—like a sealed APC, a grounded ship with an intact cabin, or an airlocked facility—is safe.

BLACK GOO BOMB RANGE CHART

ZONE	RADIUS	EFFECTS
EPICENTER	0–1 km	Automatic Petrification. Those in the immediate dropzone projectile vomit black fluid, convulse and ossify into twisted and ashen macabre statues.
KILL ZONE	1–2 km	Automatic Disintegration. Victims become Terminal Anathemas (page 66) and disintegrate within D6 Rounds.
MUTATION ZONE	2–4 km	Automatic Transformation. Within one Turn, victims morph into Freak Anathemas.
PERIPHERY	4–10 km	Infection. All victims are exposed to the atomized black goo with Virulence 3. If the Sickness Roll fails, the victim mutates into an Afflicted Anathema (page 65). Roll once per Shift.

OF FALLEN GODS AND DESTROYING ANGELS

THE JANNES RUEDI DREAM JOURNALS

Children of the Two Divines Grand Seer Jannes Ruedi has collected his notes on the Engineers and Xenomorph XX121, recorded hastily upon waking from his vivid nightmares. While often rambling and incoherent, these notes do paint a picture of his vision of these beings. Referring to them alternately as both fallen gods and Nephilim, Jannes teaches that the Engineers had lifetimes that span many millennia—over which they enlightened themselves through science and technology. Despite having male and female forms, these beings abandoned sexual reproduction in a quest to become spiritual beings of power.

THE DESTROYING ANGEL: Eons ago, one of their kind feared the end of their legacy was near—if they had not transcended existence before their line ran out, they would cease to exist. This fallen god wanted to know what more there was in the universe, and so dared to part the heavens themselves in search of answers. He was rewarded—but not as he had expected. He was gifted with the embrace of a destroying angel. Soon he birthed their lord, the divine Space Beast, which then passed judgment on many of their kind. After a millennium of stagnation—in death, a Nephilim had created new life (according to Jannes, the Destroying Angels and the Space Beast are both iterations of *P. praepotens*).

The fallen gods collected their lord's blood and harvested its mutagenic qualities to create new life amongst the stars, thus seeding their DNA and ensuring their legacy—if not themselves—would survive. Eventually the blood of their lord was lost, but the black accelerant is their re-creation of that life blood—a destroying force that creates life anew.

REGRET AND REBIRTH: The fallen gods seeded many worlds over the millennia—some of which produced intelligent life. The Nephilim periodically visit these seeded worlds to check on their creations. If their creations proved to be a disappointment, the Engineers would use the pathogen to eradicate the species and begin again. Some of these offshoots embraced the fallen gods' guidance and developed in concert with Nephilim beliefs. These were integrated into Nephilim society as outposts. Others, like the Arcturians, were simply forgotten and abandoned. Humanity itself lost their way, and so were marked for annihilation.

TRANSCENDENCE: According to Jannes' dreams, most of the fallen gods have transcended the mortal plane and exist as pure energy in the cosmos. Pockets of Nephilim still remain however, some continuing to seed new worlds while others lay comatose in hypersleep chambers that have preserved them for millennia.

MUSIC OF THE SPHERES: Jannes claims the Nephilim's senses are beyond comparison—they can hear the hum of a quasar or the steady strum of a black hole from light years away. Their acute hearing makes music an important part of Nephilim culture—so much that the playing of particular notes is necessary to the operation of their technologies. They not only hear music, but can see it. Jannes' interpretation of Engineer hieroglyphs and pictograms indicate that the fallen gods also possess hyper-sensitive eyes that can see into different dimensions than ours do, revealing a surreal color and beauty in what humans might consider dark and grim.

A NOTE FROM MU/TH/UR: Jannes Ruedi's assertion that the Engineers live for millennia is particularly hard to swallow. It's important to point out that nothing Jannes says is substantiated—no scientist has even confirmed his translations are correct, and no one has communicated with a living engineer—assuming there are even any left. It is unknown if these journals speak truth or are just the mad ramblings of a damaged mind. Make certain they stay unconfirmed in your campaign. Drive your players crazy with the mystery—not knowing is part of what makes it so alien. ■

GENERIC NPC STATS

NPC	STR	AGL	WIT	EMP	HEALTH	SKILLS	TALENTS	TYPICAL GEAR
Outer Rim Colonists/ Settlers	5	3	3	3	5	Close Combat 1, Heavy Machinery 3, Stamina 2, Survival 3, Comtech 1	Merciless	Geological or biological testing kit (as appropriate to the colony), ropes and climbing equipment, flashlight, multi-tool, sample containers.
Frontier Marshals	4	4	4	2	4	Close Combat 2, Ranged Combat 3, Mobility 1, Observation 2, Manipulation 1, Medical Aid 1	Investigator	Folding knife, Armat Model 37A2 12 Gauge Pump-Action Shotgun, M4A3 Pistol, handcuffs, flashlight.
Convicted Killers	5	3	2	4	5	Close Combat 3, Heavy Machinery 1, Stamina 2, Manipulation 2,	Menacing	Two shivs, four packs of cigarettes, one dose of Arcturian Sweet Dreams.
Insurgents	5	3	3	3	5	Close Combat 1, Heavy Machinery 2, Stamina 2, Ranged Combat 1, Comtech 1, Survival 3	Hard Hitter	EVA Pistol, 4047 Pulse Rifle or shotgun, Molotov cocktail.
Cult Fanatics	4	3	2	5	4	Close Combat 3, Ranged Combat 1, Observation 2, Manipulation 4	Hothead	Recreational drugs, X-Stims, razor blade, religious pamphlet.
Terrorists	3	3	3	5	3	Close Combat 2, Mobility 1, Ranged Combat 3, Manipulation 2	Nerves of Steel	Belt of 20 M-40 Grenades, X-Stims, F903WE Assault Rifle, pocket knife.
Independent Security Forces	5	4	3	2	5	Close Combat 2, Stamina1, Ranged Combat 3, Mobility 2, Observation 2	Overkill	Kevlar armor, M41A Pulse Rifle, portable medkit, four grenades, flashlight.
Space Consortium PMCs	5	3	4	2	7	Close Combat 2, Ranged Combat 5, Observation 2, Mobility 2, Manipulation 1	Tough	W-Y M3 Armor, M41A Pulse Rifle with bayonet, portable medkit, six grenades, flashlight.
Weyland-Yutani Dog Catchers	4	5	4	1	4	Close Combat 3, Mobility 1, Ranged Combat 4, Observation 2	Merciless	APE suit, M41A or M41AE2 Pulse Rifle, catch pole and containment gear, hunting knife, portable medkit, flashlight, binoculars
3WE Royal Marine Commandos	5	4	3	2	5	Close Combat 3, Ranged Combat 5, Mobility 2, Stamina 2	Rapid Fire	Kevlar armor, NSG23 Assault Rifle, four grenades, portable medkit, flashlight
3WE ISAF Pilots/ Soldiers	4	4	3	3	4	Close Combat 2, Ranged Combat 4, Mobility 2, Piloting 2	Heavy Weapons	Kevlar armor, Weyland ES-4 Pistol, personal medkit.
USCMC Officers	3	4	3	4	3	Close Combat 1, Ranged Combat 3, Command 3, Manipulation 3	Field Commander	VP70 or MA4E Pistol, P-DAT, two grenades, flashlight, portable medkit, pocket knife
USCMC Rifleman	5	5	2	2	5	Close Combat 2, Stamina 1, Mobility 3, Ranged Combat 3, Survival 1	Past the Limit	M3 Personnel Armor, M41A Pulse Rifle, MA4E Pistol, flash-light, personal medkit, four grenades, combat knife
USASF Pilots/ USCMC Drop-ship Crew	3	5	3	3	3	Piloting 3, Ranged Combat 3, Comtech 3, Observation 1	Full Throttle	VP-70 Pistol (USAF) or MA4E Pistol (USCMC), Starbright flares

NPC	STR	AGL	WIT	EMP	HEALTH	SKILLS	TALENTS	TYPICAL GEAR
NCO Synthetic	7	5	5	3	7	Mobility 2, Comtech 3, Observation 2, Medical Aid 3	Watchful	P-DAT, tools, extra M41A Ammo, PR-PUT laptop.
USCMC Elite AW Soldiers (Blackguard)	6	3	3	2	6	Close Combat 4, Ranged Combat 5, Mobility 3	Menacing, Overkill	Black M3 Armor, M41AE2 Pulse Rifle, combat knife, six grenades.
Project Scientist	3	4	5	2	3	Comtech 4, Observation 3, Survival 1, Manipulation 1, Medical Aid 1	Inquisitive	Seegson System Diagnostic Device, Samani E-Series Watch, electronic repair kit, CBRN kit.
Project Surgeon	2	4	4	4	2	Observation 3, Manipulation 3, Medical Aid 4	Field Surgeon	Bio-testing kit, personal medkit, surgical kit, flashlight, TX-9 Pistol with six doses each of X-Stims, Neversleep, and Naproleve.
UPPA Soldier	4	4	3	3	4	Close Combat 2, Stamina 2, Mobility 2, Ranged Combat 3, Survival 1	Hug the Dirt	6B90 Combat Armor, QSZ-203 Pistol, flashlight, AK-4047, four grenades, combat knife.
UPP SOF Commandos	5	4	3	2	5	Close Combat 4, Ranged Combat 4, Mobility 2, Stamina 1, Survival 1	Zero-G Training	CC5 Compression Suit, AK-104 Suit Gun, QSZ-203 Pistol, flashlight, four grenades, combat knife.
UPP MSS Officer	3	3	4	4	3	Close Combat 2, Mobility 1, Ranged Combat 3, Observation 3, Manipulation 3	Stealthy, Intimidation	QSZ-203 Pistol, two grenades, TX-9 Injection Air Pistol, folding knife, P-DAT.
Working Joe Androids	7	2	1	1	7	Heavy Machinery 3, Comtech 3	Pack Mule	Maintenance jack, Watatsumi DV-303 Bolt Gun or mechanical cutting torch.
						CODEPENDENT OPERATION: Working Joes can only perform limited pre-programmed actions unless synced to an APOLLO or 1VAN/3 computer. All adaptation and cognitive thought come from their computer link up. In effect, they are disposable bodies for their control computer. The mainframe can temporarily add its own skills to a Working Joe's for one Round (see page 130 in the core rule book for mainframe attributes). **FACTORY STANDARD:** All Working Joes have the same attributes. **ANDROID FLAW—SUBSTANDARD COMPONENTS:** Like UPP androids, Working Joes are made on the cheap. Any critical injury on this model of synthetic always triggers two rolls on the chart for critical injuries on synthetics on page 111 of the ALIEN RPG core rulebook.		
UPP David-5 "Phyat Davydovich" Dream Technician MSS Android	7	5	4	4	7	Mobility 2, Comtech 5, Observation 3	Watchful	P-DAT, Neuro Visor
UPP David-7 "Syem Davydovich" Combat Model Android	7	7	4	2	7	Close Combat 3, Mobility 2, Ranged Combat 3, Comtech 1, Observation 1	Killer	6B90 Combat Armor, QSZ-203 Pistol, flashlight, AK-4047, four grenades, combat knife
						ANDROID FLAW - SUBSTANDARD COMPONENTS: The UPP uses lower grade materials, meaning any critical injury on this model of synthetic always triggers two rolls on the chart for critical injuries on synthetics on page 111 of the ALIEN RPG core rulebook.		

MISSIONS

"The signal's weird—there must be some interference or something. There's movement all over the place!"
"Get back to Operations! It's game time."

—PRIVATE FIRST CLASS WILLIAM HUDSON AND SENIOR CORPORAL DWAYNE HICKS, 2ND BATTALION BRAVO TEAM

The Frontier is in turmoil—and this chapter gives you a sampling of just how bad it is out there for your players. These missions work within the framework of the Frontier War campaign, can be used separately for your own stories, or—with a little redecorating, you can use them for both—I won't tell if you don't.

MISSION 1:

OPERATION BLAZE OF GLORY

O'BANNON'S WORLD

Along with a Weyland-Yutani insurance representative, the PCs are ordered to find the UAS *Glory*—a Hospital Corps frigate that was shot down over the jungle moon of O'Bannon's World. But the ship actually hails from the UPP—and the so-called insurance rep is there to ensure the PCs retrieve everything relating to something called the Darkstar Program, as well as the ship's precious cargo—stolen USCMC Project Life Force test subjects in cryosleep with Biodrone Facehuggers on their faces.

GEAR UP

The PCs have access to their standard gear for this mission, with the exception of an APC. To destroy the wreck, their dropship is loaded with three drums of QTC and each PC is supplied with an Armat type 4 Breach Charge. They can requisition whatever other equipment they think they may need, but as quartermaster that's up to MU/TH/UR 9000 (i.e. you) to decide if it's warranted or not. In addition, Mr. Ganon carries a "Pups" Parameter Uplink Spectrograph Mapping Device (page 134 of the core rulebook) to help search the wreck.

WHAT THE HELL IS REALLY GOING ON?

The crashed ship is actually a UPP ship that attacked a USCMC top secret Project Life Force transport and stole their Biodrone Xenomorph infected cryo-sleepers. The insurance agent the PCs are bringing with them—Mr. Ganon—is actually there to secure its flight recorder and any living cryo-sleepers. He is carrying sealed orders from General Vaughn to prove as much.

WHAT'S THE SITUATION, MU/TH/UR?

After the marines awaken from cryosleep in orbit over their new mission target, their CO will address them:

"Morning, Marines—time to stow those teddy bears and earn them paychecks. Six weeks ago, the frontline Hospital Corps ship UAS Glory was returning to Tithonus when she ran into trouble. Ship squawked out an SOS, went down over O'Bannon's World, and lost herself beneath the jungle canopy. Now you get to go find her.

The trees here are a bitch—MU/TH/UR can't visually confirm the location of the crashed ship, and this damn moon's magnetic poles make her orbital sensors all but useless.

But you'll be taking Mr. Ganon with you—a company insurance rep. He's here to assess the damage to the Glory and determine what caused the crash. He's handy, too—Mr. Ganon's got the transponder codes and tracking P-DAT you'll need to find the wreck in all that magnetic interference the moon puts off.

Scanning for the transponder signal, you'll fly a search pattern until you pick up the Glory's beacon. When you find it, your dropship pilot will deploy you over the site with a couple drums of QTC. Get in there, get the survey, grab the Glory's flight recorder, extract any survivors, and blow her to hell—we don't want to leave anything salvageable behind.

Surface-to-ship transmissions on the moon are impossible without a relay, so the dropship will stay moon-side and do check-in flybys. If you need backup support, your Cheyenne pilot will have to stick his head up out of the atmosphere and give us a holler. Otherwise your team is on its own down there."

Show the players the image on page 14, which displays O'Bannon's World from above, and offer them whatever info you see fit from the moon's write-up on page 155.

KENT GANON

WEYLAND-YUTANI INSURANCE INVESTIGATOR

A ferret-faced up and coming company man in his mid-20s, the elitist Mr. Ganon does not belong in any jungle that isn't made of concrete, steel, or glass. In over his head, he's worried about his expensive new jungle boots being damaged by, well, jungle. After Ganon raided the private server of his former rival, the late Carter J. Burke, he used the Nostromo case files he uncovered to push his way into Deep Void. While Ganon may profess ignorance and feign innocence, only he knows the team's true mission is to re-acquire Project Life Force assets stolen by the UPP (see the boxed text "A Little Insurance" on page 230).

STRENGTH 2, AGILITY 3, WITS 5, EMPATHY 4

HEALTH: 2

SKILLS: Observation 3, Command 3, Manipulation 4

TALENT: Take Control

GEAR: ES4 Pistol, "Pups"Mapping Device, P-DAT with sealed orders and UPP codes, $10,000 jungle boots, and $60,000 in bribe money (large bills).

METAPUZZLE PIECES

While Frontier War missions can be played in any order, escalating campaign clues called epiphanies occur in a predetermined sequence (see the Metapuzzle on page 193). Relevant metapuzzle pieces for this mission can be learned from W-Y Insurance Agent Mr. Ganon and his P-DAT, Komaszyło and his SOF Commandos, and from the *Glory's* flight recorder itself.

The Chestbursters carried by HK4412-08 and his cryosleepers are evidence of the Biodrone bioweapons program. Combined with the *Glory's* flight recorder, they provide proof of the existence of Project Life Force.

INSERTION

As the PCs' dropship enters the atmosphere, all comms crackle and pop. While local communications work within the atmosphere, signals to the *Tamb'Itam* are now impossible. A small workstation is located aft of the Cheyenne's cockpit, allowing the PCs to scan for the *Glory's* transponder signal with Mr. Ganon's assistance. He has the transponder codes on his P-DAT. He is very protective of the information on the device and insists on entering the transponder codes himself.

The PCs find the signal almost instantly—all that's left is to do low-level flyover scans until the signal can be triangulated. Any sense of ease, however, is short lived—as the dropship is savagely attacked by an aerospace fighter. The craft is fast and the dropship's sensors are shaky from the magnetic interference, so the PCs won't be able to identify it. It is, however, a MiG 730 Interceptor, launched from the orbiting SSV *Võ Nguyên Giáp*. The UPP is here for the *Glory* as well.

A lucky shot from the MiG's gatling cannon hits for 5 points of damage, inflicting component damage on the dropship. If the dropship is piloted by an NPC, the attack lights up the cockpit and kills the pilots. The dropship begins spinning out of control. As sirens warn of an inevitable crash, the PCs must take control of the dropship! The dropship has an altitude of one zone (page 115 in the core rulebook). To stop the crash, one PC must first roll **MOBILITY** to make it to the cockpit and then **PILOTING** to stop the crash. Only one PC can try. If either roll fails, the dropship crashes and is Wrecked. If the dropship is piloted by a PC, the MiG shot instead sends the dropship into a spin. The pilot then just needs to make a **PILOTING** roll to stop the crash, as above.

If the PCs take control of the dropship, the danger isn't over—the MiG isn't done, and the PCs will have to face it in aerial combat (page 113 of the core rulebook). The MiG is four zones distant and two zones above, and its pilot has **AGILITY** 4 and **PILOTING** 3. Remember that the dropship has suffered 5 points of damage already. If the dogfight goes badly, the pilot can land to escape the MiG. It will destroy the dropship, but cannot track the PCs through the foliage and will soon leave. If the PCs win the dogfight, the pilot then realizes that the fuel tank has been ruptured. They need to land immediately, and must continue on foot.

WHERE THE ENEMIES ARE

This independent moon doesn't belong to the UA or the UPP—it belongs to Dinh Ngoc Ha and her Last Chance settlers. They will shoot down the PCs' dropship and stalk them through the jungle—although they have the potential to become allies.

- **A UPP SOF unit—Komaszyło's Commandos—is on-moon with the same objectives as the PCs. They will conduct flyover searches for the wreck of the *Glory*, and eventually lead an assault on the ship.**
- **A UPP MiG-730 Aerospace Interceptor is moving just within the moon's atmosphere, acting as a relay between Komaszyło's Commandos and the UPP Destroyer SSV *Võ Nguyên Giáp*. Just as the PCs' dropship enters the atmosphere and loses communication with the *Tamb'Itam*, the interceptor will strike.**
- **Dangerous native fauna and flora like running flatfish, mudbugs, and vampire vines live in both the jungle and ship wreckage.**
- **Three cryo-sleepers have survived the crash of the *Glory*—all convicted murderers carrying Biodrone Chestbursters. Any of them awakened from their hypersleep chambers will feign amnesia, bide their time, and escape into the jungle.**
- **Finally, three "Ghost" Settlers lurk in the wreck of the *Glory*— waging psychological warfare on the PCs and ambushing them time and again before melding back into the shadows.**

MOVING OUT

On the ground, give the PCs a second to gather themselves. Magnetic interference from the moon's poles makes it impossible for them to get in touch with the *Tamb'Itam*. Mr. Ganon will suggest they find the *Glory* and use its transmitter to call for help. The only way they are going home is to avoid the hostiles and the local wildlife, get to the crashed ship, use its systems to uplink to their frigate in orbit and call for the other dropship.

Mr. Ganon's P-DAT can home in on the transponder code frequency. He is still very secretive about the P-DAT, insisting that he do the tracking. Whomever carries it, the PCs can use the device to follow the low-level transponder signals back to the wreck. If the PCs are suspicious enough to examine the codes, a successful **COMTECH** roll indicates they don't look like any UA transponder signals the PCs know of. They aren't—they are UPP MMS codes—but the PC's won't know that part until they arrive to the ship.

A NOTE FROM MU/TH/UR: Mr. Ganon is out of his element in the jungle. Realizing he may have inadvertently made himself look suspicious to the PCs, the insurance rep will go out of his way to gain the PCs' trust. He will say whatever it takes to keep the PCs pushing on to their objective and backpedal whenever he is caught in a lie. ■

INCOMING!

As the PCs start moving out, they suddenly find themselves under heavy fire from a group of four settlers from the Last Chance Settlement. The Settlers attack from three zones away (**LONG** range). One is armed with an RPG122, the others with F903WE Automated Assault Rifles. They will fire the RPG until the dropship is destroyed (unless it already was). A successful hit will ignite the QTC drums within the dropship's hold, causing it to explode violently.

When the Settlers run out of rockets, or when one of them is Broken, they will withdraw into the jungle. If forced to surrender, these settlers will explain their actions—they don't want UPP or UA forces on their soil—their grandparents suffered enough while caught between the two supernations during the Dog War. They were ordered by their settlement matriarch—Dinh Ngoc Ha—to drive off any trespassing military forces.

LAST CHANCE SETTLERS

Loyal to Dinh Ngoc Ha, the Last Chance Settlers are tired of being caught up in other people's wars and only want to be left alone by all nations. They will die to keep their little corner of the Frontier free.

STRENGTH 4, AGILITY 3, WITS 3, EMPATHY 3

HEALTH: 4

SKILLS: Close Combat 1, Heavy Machinery 3, Mobility 2, Ranged Weapons 1, Comtech 1

TALENTS: Pack Mule, Stealthy

GEAR: F903WE Assault Rifle or RPG122 with six rockets, ropes and climbing equipment, flashlight, multi-tool.

DINH NGOC HA

LAST CHANCE SETTLER

An unassuming Asian woman in her late 60s, Dinh is an ex-patriot of the CANC who gave up on war and settled O'Bannon's moon two decades ago. Angered that the fighting has resumed, she shot down the dropships belonging to Komaszyło, and would have done the same to the PCs, if the UPP forces hadn't beaten her to it. She will steal from, barter with, or kill whomever necessary to get the invaders off her moon.

However, if the PCs can prove they intend to leave—and are willing to help her get rid of the UPP commando team—she will help.

STRENGTH 5, AGILITY 3, WITS 3, EMPATHY 3

HEALTH: 7

SKILLS: Close Combat 1, Heavy Machinery 3, Mobility 2, Ranged Weapons 2, Survival 4

TALENT: Tough

GEAR: F903WE Assault Rifle, RPG122, combat knife, medkit, survival kit, eight grenades.

JUNGLE TREK

The hostile nature of the jungle moon complicates things (see O'Bannon's World on page 155). A burning hot gas giant fills most of the sky during the day. The humid atmosphere is dense and supports rich growths of swamps and tropical forests under a thick jungle canopy that blocks out 95% of sunlight, leaving the understory in perpetual gloom.

If the PCs want to see what's going on above the canopy, they need to climb the 40 meter trees to do it. This takes a Turn of time and requires a hard (-2) **MOBILITY** roll—several attempts can be made, but each failure will result in a fall of 2D6 meters (see falling damage on page 108 of the core rulebook).

This vegetation is dangerous and cruel—it will harass, injure, kill, and in some circumstances even devour an unwary Marine. The PCs need to huff it on foot through the jungle and knee-deep swamp to the site—a trip that will take a Shift to complete.

JUNGLE TREK ENCOUNTER CHART

This chart will help you keep the walk through the jungle interesting. Feel free to roll or just pick as many encounters as you want during the trek.

D6	EVENT
1	The PCs wade through some waist deep-water full of "mudbugs"—bright yellow prawn-like crustaceans, which are edible and very common on O'Bannon's World. A random PCs gets +1 STRESS LEVEL and must make an immediate Panic Roll as the mudbugs wriggle through their clothing.
2	A random PC trips on something and lands face first in the mud. It's a human skull with a hole in it—the victim of a headbite (STRESS LEVEL +1).
3	The distant hooting of some native animal goes on for some time, then ends in a strangled gurgle. There will be no more hooting.
4	Two Last Chance Settlers are carrying large buckets of mudbugs (see #1) back to their camp. The PCs can stay hidden by rolling MOBILITY. If they are spotted or intentionally reveal their presence, the settlers are startled and quiet (they only speak Chinese). Dihn Ngoc Ha and four F903WE Assault Rifle armed Settlers watch from the trees to see what the PCs do. If the PCs are good to them, Dinh and her group will not attack. Instead, they will secretly follow the PCs and help them if they get into trouble.
5	The PCs pass a patch of long dark-green vines, dotted here-and-there with purple orchid-like flowers, each holding a dark orb-like "eyeball" that seems to blink and track the Marines as they pass (STRESS LEVEL +1). Next, one PC steps on something metal. It's an M20 Anti-Personnel Mine, left over from the Dog War. The mine is rusty, deactivated, and dead (but let the players sweat it out until someone can confirm that with a demanding HEAVY MACHINERY roll). However, where there's one mine, there's usually a field of them (Dealer's Choice).
6	The PCs walk through a patch of slick-petaled plants coated with a strong irritant—causing any exposed flesh to redden and itch. All PCs must roll STAMINA—failure means +1 STRESS LEVEL. A successful MEDICAL AID roll will stop the desire to scratch.

THE WRECK

The jungle canopy has grown over the wreck, obscuring it from flybys. The ship itself is in fragments, with only a single hull section still intact—partially flooded, thickly overgrown with fast-growing local vegetation, and rammed into a steep mud bank. Other pieces of wreckage are scattered throughout the swamp.

The crashed ship has been down for six months, not weeks—and is most certainly not a USCMC Hospital Corps ship. The ship is actually the UPP SSV *Glory of the Proletariat*, and a scrap of hull will reveal as much.

The main hulk that remains is 78 meters long and 30 meters wide, and can be accessed at two different points: the Aft Airlock and a rent in the hull (see the Hull Access location).

Kent Ganon will suggest using his "Pups" Mapping Device to make an inital scan of the ship. If the PCs agree, show them the map on page 234. The "Pups" do not spot any enemies in the wreck.

A NOTE FROM MU/TH/UR: Every location inside the ship is flooded with meter-deep, oily black swamp water unless otherwise indicated. Indigenous plant-life has also spread throughout the ship. ■

A LITTLE INSURANCE

Once the PCs see they've been lied to about the ship, they'll likely start questioning everything. If pressured with a MANIPULATION roll, the "insurance rep" Kent Ganon will then show them their sealed P-DAT authenticated orders, signed by General Vaughn herself.

Their true mission is to secure the *Glory of the Proletariat* flight recorder and any cryo-sleeper survivors (preferably still asleep). Ganon's P-DAT not only also contains the cracked UPP transponder codes, but their computer access ones as well. If the PCs already know anything about Xenomorphs and confront the insurance investigator, he will insist that any Xenos that got free would all be dead by now—they were neutered and given an expiration date. If pressured, Ganon can also inform the PCs about Project Life Force, assuming they weren't already aware of it, of course.

RUNNING FLATFISH

This brown millipede-like fish-creature is up to two meters long with a flattened body that enables it to swim as well as crawl along hull bulkheads and ceiling panels. It is fast and inflicts a poisoned bite.

HEALTH: 2

SKILLS: Mobility 12, Observation 4

ARMOR RATING: 3

ATTACK: The Flatfish attacks with five Base Dice and its poisonous bite has Damage 1. On a hit, a human victim must make a Sickness Roll against Virulence 6. This works as per the disease rules (page 109 of the core rulebook), but roll once per Turn instead of once per Shift.

"O'BANNON'S BANE" VAMPIRE VINES

Usually found growing up the sides of trees and structures, these bright green creeping vines seek out a warmblooded animal at rest, pricking them with thorns covered in a numbing toxin. The victim rolls for STAMINA—if it fails, the victim is oblivious and the vines look for an orifice—any orifice—and begin to invade the animal's body.

After one Turn, the victim will wake up covered in vines and rooted to the spot, thousands of plant tendrils slipping down their tear ducts and ears, up their nose, down their throat, under their fingernails and throughout other terrible places. Roll nine Base Dice each Turn—for each ✦ rolled, the victim suffers one point of damage. A formidable (–3) CLOSE COMBAT roll is required to break free. Others can attack the vines, which have Health 6.

Cocooned within the vines that weave under their clothing, rooted victims have been described as looking like living scarecrows. After a successful kill, a gorged Vampire Vine will turn red in hue, consuming its victim's fluids for another Shift before it fades to green and begins creeping for its next meal. All that is left is clothes and bones.

SEARCHING THE CRASH SITE

Should the PCs want to look around outside the wreck, it will take them about one Turn (5–10 minutes) to cover one search area (there are four, each one a compass direction: North, South, East or West). Roll OBSERVATION. Only one PC can roll per search area, but others can help, adding an extra die per person. If successful, roll once on the following table per search. The PCs can only search a compass direction once.

2D6	ITEM FOUND
2	Dented and semi-submerged cargo container, now home to two Running Flatfish.
3	Main spar, bent and twisted, showing signs of weapons fire.
4	Rotten CCC5 compression suit holding a skeleton—covered in vines inside the helmet.
5	Fragment of the bridge, with smashed consoles, hanging wires and shredded acceleration couches.
6	Sealed water tanks, still filled with fresh, drinkable water.
7	Weapon turret, smashed, with part of a railgun still attached. If salvaged for parts, will cut down the time needed to repair the railgun turret to only one Turn.
8	Personal effects, such as a bag, briefcase or item of clothing—including up to 70,000 UPP rupees (the equivalent of $730 UA)
9	An oil tank, twisted and semi-submerged, leaking oil into the swamp. If shot, the tank could explode (Armor Rating 6 – if penetrated by a hit, roll one Stress Die for each point of damage, on one or more ✦, it explodes with Blast Damage 15).
10	Internal airlock door, covered in acid burns.
11–12	Meters and meters of shredded electrical cable. Can be repurposed to repair the ship's Railgun Turret (+1 on HEAVY MACHINERY rolls), as rope, to create a tripwire alarm around the perimeter, and other creative uses.

LOCATIONS

MUDBANK: This is where the PCs will come across the ship. This ten-meter-tall muddy hill was created by the ship slamming into the swamp during its crash landing. Climbing the slippery hill requires a hard (–2) **MOBILITY** roll. Failure means sliding down into the wreck or the watery muck.

A half-buried piece of hull with an attached beacon is emitting the transponder signal. Written on its side is *Glory*—but an **OBSERVATION** roll will indicate there is more to the name, hidden in the mud. Clearing it away reveals it to be the *Glory of the Proletariat*—along with Russian writing under it. It is a wrecked UPP assault ship.

Insurance Rep. Ganon feigns surprise—he says he's just as confused as the PCs are (he's not). After a moment, he will suggest—since they are already there—that they might as well locate the *Glory's* flight recorder and search for any survivors. This way, no one can accuse them of not doing their job.

If the PCs won't comply, Ganon admits he knew the vessel belonged to the UPP. He then tells them that it doesn't matter—their job is still to retrieve the ship's flight recorder. Any survivors are to be considered targets of interest (see the boxed text titled "A Little Insurance" on page 230 for more on what Ganon knows).

SPINY THORN TREE: These green, wickedly spiked trees have long surface roots. The slick bark is patterned with a sickly white grain. O'Bannon's Bane (page 231) lives in this tree.

FISH HOOK BUSH: Ubiquitous low-lying bushes with "fish hook" shaped barbs that are forever tearing or snagging Marine clothing (–1 to all skill rolls in these areas). In the mud beneath the bush is a flooded cryosleep chamber, ejected during the crash. Oddly enough, it's a USCMC hypersleep pod, not a UPP one. Inside is a skeletal body—covered in vines that have crept into the bed. The skeleton's rib cage is bent outward like it exploded from within—the dead Biodrone by the Computer Mainframe was born from this victim.

AFT ENGINEERING AIRLOCK: This outer door is locked—the inner one is open. A maintenance jack (no roll required) or a successful **HEAVY MACHINERY** roll will open it. A **COMTECH** roll to bypass the airlock door will only work if power is restored first.

FUEL TANK: Reaction mass for the motors still sits here, 280 cubic meters of industrial, powdered carbon-diamond.

REACTION THRUSTER: This auxiliary engine can be coaxed into firing up with a Turn of work and a **HEAVY MACHINERY** roll. It will not lift the ship, but can be used once to trigger a Blast Power 15 explosion.

WORKSHOP: The machinery here is smashed and inverted. Just outside the door is a hatch and ladder in the floor which leads to the Submerged Deck. There are assorted tools here in crumpled lockers, like a maintenance jack, a bolt gun, and various other items that might reasonably be found in such a place.

PORT CARGO DECK: This dark space is filled with aluminum cargo boxes, tumbled and scattered like a child's toy bricks. They contain shipboard supplies, but most are rusted, rotten or spoiled.

STARBOARD CARGO DECK: The large door here is buckled and burst outwards, allowing easy access inside. Light filters in through the cracks and rips in the exterior hull, revealing two partly submerged orange BYK Power Loaders (UPP knock-offs of the P-5000 Powered Work Loader on page 128 of the core rulebook). With a Turn of work and a **HEAVY MACHINERY** roll each, the power loaders can be restarted.

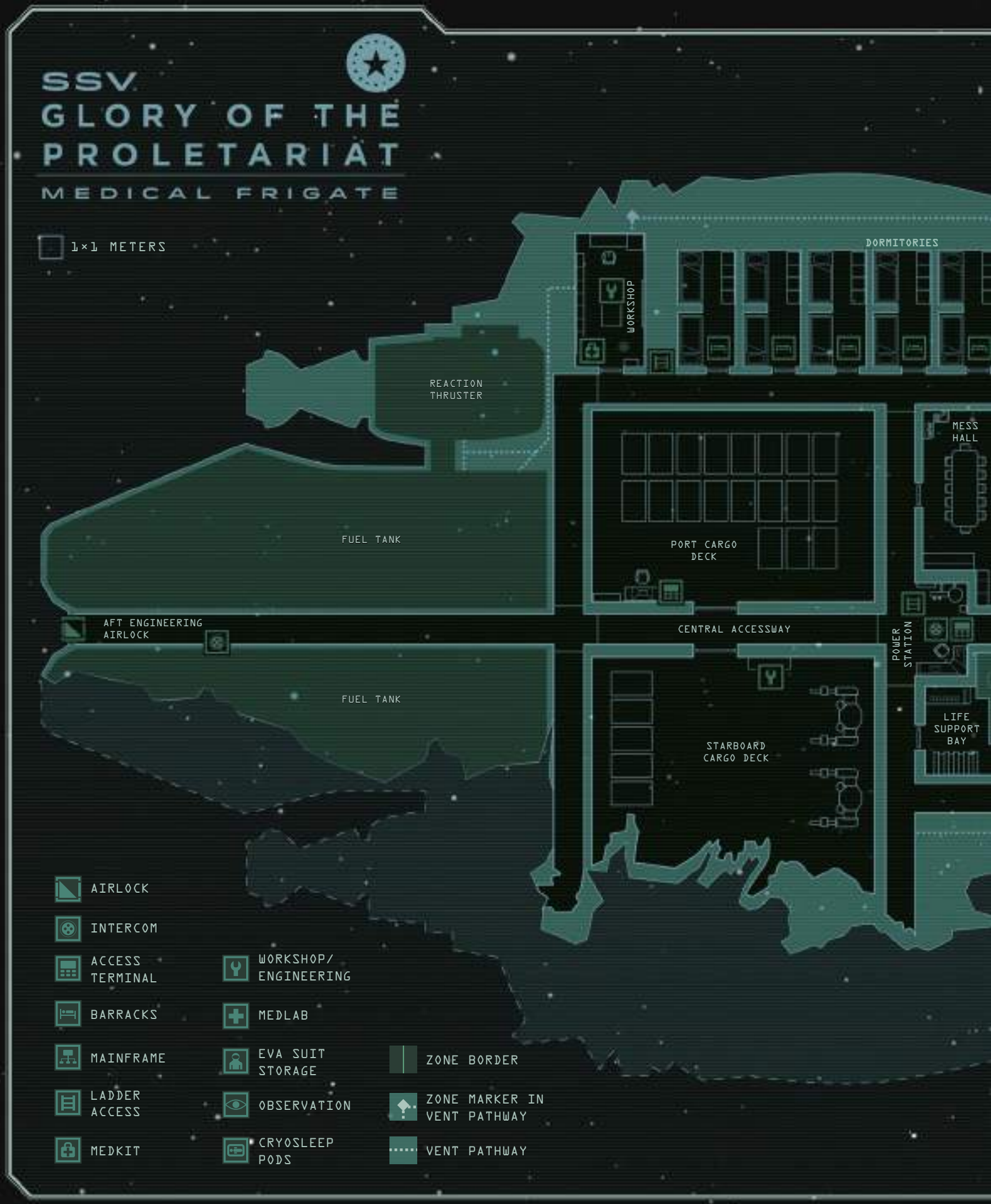
CENTRAL ACCESSWAY: The main corridor has yellow-green hairy vegetation hanging in strands from the ceiling and black-colored mold and other plant-life growing along the walls. Two Running Flatfish live here and will attack anyone who enters the area.

POWER STATION: The batteries here can be coaxed to life with a hard **HEAVY MACHINERY** roll, supplying power to any three sections of the ship the PCs choose. A failed roll will instead send a jolt of electricity through the water in the room (roll for an attack with six Base Dice against anyone in the room, base Damage 1, only HAZMAT protects). An open hatch and ladder in the floor lead to the Submerged Deck.

MESS HALL: This flooded crew rec area and canteen has plastic plates and cups floating on the oily water. Thick vegetation grows out of all the kitchen units.

DORMITORIES: Each 4.5m-long dorm was once home to four UPP troops. The flimsy mattresses and bedding have rotted away, while mold covers the rest of the furniture. Floating in the water are old photographs and numerous personal possessions, but nothing of any worth.

SENSOR MAINTENANCE BAY: A technical area used to calibrate the military vessel's sensor suite. The outside spiky sensor antenna array can be tapped into and used to contact the *Tamb'Itam* in orbit and call for extraction. It takes a **COMTECH** roll and a **HEAVY MACHINERY** roll to jury-rig her transmitter with the antennas of her sensor array. One attempt can be made each Shift. A family of three Running Flatfish lives here. An open hatch and ladder in the floor leads to the Submerged Deck.


SSV
GLORY OF THE
PROLETARIAT
MEDICAL FRIGATE
1×1 METERS
DORMITORIES
WORKSHOP
REACTION
THRUSTER
MESS
HALL
FUEL TANK
PORT CARGO
DECK
AFT ENGINEERING
AIRLOCK
CENTRAL ACCESSWAY
POWER
STATION
FUEL TANK
LIFE
SUPPORT
BAY
STARBOARD
CARGO DECK
AIRLOCK
INTERCOM
ACCESS
TERMINAL
WORKSHOP/
ENGINEERING
BARRACKS
MEDLAB
MAINFRAME
EVA SUIT
STORAGE
ZONE BORDER
LADDER
ACCESS
OBSERVATION
ZONE MARKER IN
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MEDKIT
CRYOSLEEP
PODS
VENT PATHWAY

DECK
A
AUTOMATED RAILGUN TURRET
SENSOR MAINTENANCE BAY
SENSOR DECOY MAGAZINE
COMPUTER MAINFRAME
BRIEFING ROOM
MAGAZINE
MUSTER STATION
MEDBAY
SHOWERS AND HEADS
GUARDROOM
HULL ACCESS
HYPERSLEEP BAY

PLAYER MAP

MAGAZINE: A maintenance hatch allows access to this magazine, which contains hundreds of tungsten rounds mounted in auto-loading racks for the Railgun Turret.

SHOWERS AND HEADS: Communal showers and toilet facilities, flooded and overgrown.

LIFE SUPPORT BAY: The broken and smashed water recyclers, air scrubbers and water heaters here are flooded and overgrown. Water continuously drips from the ceiling. The deep water in this room leads to the Submerged Deck.

Stuck to the wall near the door at odd angles and covered in xenomorphic resin are two dead Ovomorphs (page 300 in the core rulebook), each sagging like a rotting pumpkin filled with the skeletal spider-corpse of a Facehugger. Also stuck to the resin is a rotting human corpse, sitting upright in the fetal position with its knees pushed up to its chin. A putrid shell is partially crystalized around this half-a-man, making his huddled form somewhat resemble another Ovomorph. It's dead—the man never finished transforming into an egg.

HYPERSLEEP BAY: There is a crack in the hull here—not wide enough to crawl through, but sufficient to expose the bay's 19 intact hypersleep pods to the elements. The 20th pod can be found outside the ship, under the Fish Hook Bush. 16 pods are offline and half buried in muck, their occupants putrid skeletons. The remaining three pods glow faintly—active tubes still sealed and operating on emergency power with their occupants asleep.

Through the extremely fogged glass, it will appear as if each occupant is wearing a breather mask of some kind—a barcode stamped Facehugger wrapped around their head. These have already had their Biodrone Chestburster embryos implanted—if they are woken up, the Facehuggers come off with ease, dead.

A successful **OBSERVATION** roll will determine that even though this is a UPP ship, these cryosleep pods are definitely USCMC standard issue. Mr. Ganon will claim the cryosleep survivors have information that could end the Frontier War (the "information" is actually the embryos they carry, but the PCs aren't going to be told about that unless there is no choice. See "A Little Insurance" on page 230 for more). If the survivors are kept in stasis the entire time, this can come into play later in the campaign.

The three survivors each have a six digit serial number on their shirts—HK4413-07, -08, and -09. Should you choose, cryo-sleeper HK4413-08 may accidentally be released from hypersleep when the PCs check the equipment. The PCs can decide what to do with the rest, but Ganon will urge them to keep the sleepers frozen. The cryo-sleepers will claim to not know their names and allegedly have no memory of their former lives. While this may seem to be an effect of the damage to the cryosleep chambers, in reality they are all UA prisoners—convicted murderers—that were unknowingly used as guinea pigs by Project Life Force.

There are ways the PCs can discover the truth about them. HK4413-08 and the others will have clearly American accents. While it can't be seen in the cryosleep chamber, each has a prison barcode on the back of their neck. When all hell breaks loose or it is somehow revealed that they have a thing growing inside their chests (via autodoc or whatnot), any one of them will crack and tell the truth about themselves. Finally, Ganon has their info organized via their barcodes on his P-DAT. Either he can be pushed to reveal it or a PC can hack it (**COMTECH** roll).

If the PCs drop their guard, any awakened convicts will steal food, water, and weapons before slipping away into the night. If caught, they will admit their origins. Unless dramatic effect is called for, their Chestbursters won't be born until the PCs are off-moon. Any of them that leave O'Bannon's World with the PCs won't pop until they are either on board the dropship or back on the *Tamb'Itam*.

MEDBAY: The ship's infirmary, with an AutoDoc. Remarkably, it has long-life emergency batteries and can still be coaxed into use with a **COMTECH** roll. Although few may be brave enough to use it, be assured it is perfectly safe.

A NOTE FROM MU/TH/UR: The Biodrone Xenomorph responsible for this nest is dead—its corpse is located by the Cumputer Mainframe. If the PCs have not encountered Xenomorph XX121 specimens before, they will have no idea what to make of the eggs. Ganon, however, will be alarmed. If pushed, he will explain that the eggs are part of a bioweapon that may be loose on the ship, and they are here to retrieve it before the UPP arrives. See "A Little Insurance" on page 230 for more. ■

GUARDROOM: A military office with an empty weapons rack on the back wall. There are no cases of ammo—it looks like the place was raided. There are three prison cells here, all empty. They can be locked and opened using a keycard laying on the floor.

COMPUTER MAINFRAME: Dark and offline, this 1VAN central computer terminal room is flooded. The ship's flight recorder is located here, submerged, but salvageable. To free it, a PC must work underwater for D6 Rounds and then make a **HEAVY MACHINERY** roll to cut and pry it loose. If power is restored, Ganon's P-DAT access codes will release the box.

A swarm of curious mudbugs lives here. PCs working underwater get +1 **STRESS LEVEL** and must make an immediate Panic Roll as these bright yellow prawn-like crustaceans wriggle through their clothing.

As the mudbugs clear, have the PC make an **OBSERVATION** roll. Success means they spot a dark smooth, curved shape in the water ahead. Investigation reveals a menacing set of jaws that seem to lunge at the PCs underwater! Call for an immediate Panic Roll. It's a false alarm, however—it is only the dislodged exoskeleton of a months-dead Biodrone Xenomorph. The alien died in this room when its internal clock ran out.

PCs making a successful **OBSERVATION** roll will be reminded of the Dragon from Robert Morse's banned book, *Space Beast*. If Ganon sees this exoskeleton, he will go white as a sheet.

AUTOMATED RAILGUN TURRET: This damaged shipborne railgun turret (Treat as a UPP BP-33 Celestial Gun) can be repaired with a **HEAVY MACHINERY** roll and three Turns of work (using the cable from the Searching the Crash Site chart on page 231 adds a +1 modifier to the **HEAVY WEAPONS** roll). If power is restored, a successful **COMTECH** roll can link the turret to a P-DAT, which can then be used to fire the railgun against targets both to the port (left) side of the ship and any approaching aircraft. If the **HEAVY MACHINERY** roll fails however, the ammunition magazine will explode, triggering a Blast Power 15 explosion and killing the ship's batteries.

SENSOR DECOY MAGAZINE: This deployer holds the radar and infra-red decoys that would be shot from the ship during combat maneuvers. With power restored, it still works—launching the decoys up through the canopy to land about four zones away. Each is roughly 50kg in weight (page 196 in the core rulebook).

MUSTER STATION: This compartment has fire-fighting equipment and CCC5 Compression Suits in glass-fronted lockers, all covered in a slick-petaled plant with a strong irritant as per #6 on the Jungle Trek Encounter Chart (page 229).

BRIEFING ROOM: Part of the room has collapsed and been filled with mud. It is doubtful that the PCs will identify the room's original function.

HULL ACCESS: The hull has been torn open here. The PCs can squeeze their way through and gain entrance to the ship.

SUBMERGED DECK: This collapsed underwater maze of corridors connects the Workshop, the Power Station, the Sensor Maintenance Bay, and Life Support Bay with the swamp outside the ship. The Ghosts (page 240) use this deck to move about the ship underwater. The main drives and the FTL tachyon shunt were crushed along with the rest of the deck down here.

HK4413-08 AND THE OTHER CRYO-SLEEPERS

These convicted murderers were taken from Skyfire Down Correctional Facility to be used as unknowing Biodrone hosts for Project Life Force. They each have a prison barcode on the back of their neck. They have no loyalty to each other and will only be looking for a way to sneak away from the PCs.

STRENGTH 5, AGILITY 3, WITS 2, EMPATHY 4

HEALTH: 5

SKILLS: Close Combat 5, Heavy Machinery 1, Stamina 2, Manipulation 2

TALENT: Menacing

GEAR: None, but may fashion shivs from hull pieces if not watched.

DECRYPTING THE FLIGHT RECORDER

If the PCs want to see what's on the *Glory's* flight recorder, it will take Ganon's P-DAT codes and a successful COMTECH roll to set up a process that will take a couple of hours of decoding time. The PCs don't need to monitor it, they can let the P-DAT run the decryption on its own. At the dramatically appropriate time, the decoded flight recorder will show that the bioweapon originated from within the USCMC Project Life Force, and that the UPP has created a program called Darkstar to catch up. The weapon is a creature of extraterrestrial origin that gestates within a living human host. It is designated Xenomorph XX121B, for Biodrone. The *Glory* intercepted the Project Life Force vessel the SS *Snark* and stole the Biodrone hosts in cryosleep.

A NOTE FROM MU/TH/UR: Players aren't going to win every fight, and fighting to the death isn't the only option in campaign play. If the PCs are losing in a bad way to the assaulting UPP forces and refuse to withdraw, Komaszyło will call a ceasefire and offer them a chance to surrender.

If the fight is a close-run, Komaszyło will call for a truce to work out their problems without further bloodshed (see his bio on page 240). If a dialogue is opened, any one of Komaszyło's commandos will reveal they know the Americans in cryofreeze are infected with a bioweapon called a Biodrone—the MSS stole them from the USCMC Project Life Force so that the UPP could reverse engineer the weapon and build a defense.

"How else can the peace-loving progressive peoples keep the UA from having the upper hand?" they will ask. Komaszyło's commandos will admit they intend to destroy the Glory and her flight recorder—leaving no proof that the UPP abducted the cryo-sleepers. ■

EVENTS

Here are some events that you can spring on the players. The events don't all need to occur, and they don't need to occur in the order listed. Instead, see the events as an arsenal of drama for you to use as you see fit.

THE FLYBY: The whoosh of a dropship whizzes by overhead every now and again. Visual and audio profile confirms it's a Cheyenne—but if a PC observes it carefully and makes an **OBSERVATION** roll, they get a bad feeling—there is something off about how the ship moves. Signaling the dropship is a terrible mistake. It's a Cheyenne alright—but it's a UPP Accipiter carrying Komaszyło's Commandos. This event can easily lead into The Assault.

LAST CHANCE: This encounter works best after the PCs have settled in at the *Glory*. The PCs are approached by a woman in her 60s—its Dinh Ngoc Ha, Matriarch of the Last Chance Settlement. She is unarmed. Ha will ask the PCs why they are here and offer them the chance to leave the moon.

If asked what she knows about the *Glory*, she will say that she and her people investigated the wreck about a week after the crash and stripped it of rations, rifles, and ammo—but a strange black beast had made the *Glory* its home. It snagged three of their party. They declared the wreck off limits before they finished investigating and left it to rot.

After a pleasant conversation, Ha will excuse herself. If anyone obstructs her, eight Last Chance Settlers will emerge from the jungle, their weapons trained on the PCs until they let her go.

All this has been a diversion, however. Dinh's colonists have taken one of Komaszyło's Commandos prisoner. After a lengthy "discussion," they learned from the commando that the UPP can't allow the evidence of the *Glory's* mission to fall into UA hands. Dinh has sent her "Ghosts" into the ship via the underwater passages to steal the flight recorder while the PCs are distracted. She will use it as a bargaining chip to get the PCs and UPP to leave her world.

THE HAUNTING OF THE GLORY: The PCs are not alone in the area. Three extremely stealthy Last Chance "Ghost" Settlers stalk the corridors of the *Glory* and the trees around it, making creaking and banging sounds—making it seem as though there is a man-sized creature or three living in the wreck. Use the Stealth Mode rules on page 85 of the core rulebook to play this out, and feel free to spring an ambush on the PCs when dramatically appropriate.

The Ghosts can appear anywhere. They will capture Running Flatfish and set them loose in the wreck or the PCs' camp. They will booby-trap a doorway with a fishhook bush. If the "Last Chance" event is played, they will steal the *Glory's* flight recorder.

They exit and enter the hull from underwater at will, coming up anywhere in the ship that will scare the shit out of your players. If the PCs are gaining the upper hand, the Ghost Settlers will retreat and regroup.

THE ASSAULT: The UPP have their own Darkstar Program retrieval team here. Under the command of Praporshchik Komaszyło, these nine remaining SOF commandos plus their pilot are here to secure at least one cryo-sleeper, kill the PCs, and blow up the *Glory*. They will harass the PCs with small squad attacks, sizing up the opposition until Komaszyło's Accipiter dropship assaults the *Glory*, firing its gatling gun into the jungle canopy to clear foliage for a landing. It won't fire missiles for fear of damaging the prize within the wreck. Instead, they will fast deploy Komaszyło and five commandos. Another four commandos are kept in reserve aboard the Accipiter, and will deploy only if things are going badly for Komaszyło.

PRAPORSHCHIK MACIEJ KOMASZYŁO

SOF COMMANDO

A weathered man with a thick salt and pepper mustache, Komaszyło leads his unit of twelve commandos on O'Bannon's World with orders to secure xenobiological materials and destroy the *Glory*. His team arrived here via the Destroyer *Võ Nguyên Giáp*, and one of his two Accipiter dropships was blown to hell by Dinh Ngoc Ha when they disembarked. He knows about both the Darkstar Program and Project Life Force, and will assume the PCs do as well.

If things look bad for the PCs, the honorable Komaszyło is willing to call a truce to confer—but he will only make a compromise if it means he does not go home empty-handed. He may be willing to let the flight recorder go unrecovered if the *Glory* is destroyed and he leaves with at least one cryo-sleeper or something of equal value—otherwise he'd rather not return at all.

STRENGTH 4, AGILITY 4, WITS 3, EMPATHY 3

HEALTH: 4

SKILLS: Close Combat 4, Stamina 1, Mobility 2, Ranged Combat 4, Survival 1

TALENT: Stealthy

GEAR: 6B90 Combat Armor, AK-4047 Assault Pulse Rifle, QSZ-203 Pistol, flashlight, four grenades, combat knife.

KOMASZYŁO'S COMMANDOS

These crack UPP Space Operating Force commandos are Loyal to Komaszyło and each other first, the UPP second.

STRENGTH 5, AGILITY 4, WITS 3, EMPATHY 2

HEALTH: 5

SKILLS: Close Combat 4, Mobility 2, Ranged Combat 4

TALENT: Heavy Hitter

GEAR: 6B90 Combat Armor, AK-4047 Assault Pulse Rifle, QSZ-203 Pistol, flashlight, four grenades, combat knife.

"GHOSTS"

Retired CANC commandos now in their fifties, the Last Chance Settlers called "Ghosts" are experts in psychological terror. Only operating in the dark and garbed in makeshift swamp Ghillie Suits, these Ghosts don't show up too clearly on infrared. They are difficult to see and always attack with slashing weapons, mimicking the attack of an animal. Their loyalty to Dinh Ngoc Ha and the settlement is unwavering.

STRENGTH 4, AGILITY 5, WITS 3, EMPATHY 2

HEALTH: 4

SKILLS: Close Combat 3, Mobility 3, Observation 2, Survival 2

TALENTS: Flyweight, Stealthy

GEAR: Two serrated combat knives, four razor blades, emergency rebreather mask, improvised Ghillie Suit.

FINALE

Without their dropship to relay their message, the PCs can't call for an extraction until they find the *Glory* and use her antennae to uplink to the USS *Tamb'Itam*. If the PCs fail to do this, the first dropship will be declared overdue after two Shifts and the *Tamb'Itam* will send out the other dropship to do flybys.

Whether the PCs make contact with the *Tamb'Itam* or not, the PCs can defend their position from the UPP forces until they can get the hell out of there. This could be a hard fight, but if the PCs get into real trouble, a dropship from the *Tamb'Itam* will arrive and save the day before they are wiped out. The PCs can also abandon the wreck and hoof it through the dense underbrush back to their crashed dropship and fire an emergency flare, hoping the *Tamb'Itam* sees it.

After they get the flight recorder and at least one cryo-sleeper onboard the *Tamb'Itam* and/or have destroyed the wreck of the *Glory*, they have completed their mission.

IN ORBIT: As the PCs make it to orbit, they encounter the SSV *Võ Nguyên Giáp* blocking them from reaching their frigate. This UPP Kremlin-class destroyer has been playing cat and mouse with the *Tamb'Itam* while the PCs were planetside. They must get past the destroyer and get to their frigate—or, they can coordinate with the frigate to cripple it. You can play this out or just describe the scene to the players. You can also have the PCs get new orders to board the UPP destroyer and take control (see the side mission "Assault on the Kremlin" on page 196 for more).

ALTERNATIVE USES

The crashed ship can be used outside of the Frontier War campaign. With a few minor adjustments to location descriptions, it can be adapted to serve as another ship in any number of scenarios on different worlds. Imagine a nightless jungle world with poisonous bright yellow foliage, or one with black vegetation in a perpetual twilight. At the end of the day, it's Dealer's Choice.

PATROL SHIP USS O'NIEL: When the USCSS *Nostromo* vanished without a trace near the Zeta 2 Reticuli system, the Colonial Marshal patrol ship USS *O'Niel* was routed there to conduct a search. The *O'Niel* did not locate the missing freighter, its flight recorder, or any lifeboats—but it did recover a single unidentified body, wrapped as if jettisoned in a standard "burial in space." Soon after informing the Network, the patrol ship disappeared. Orders are to retrieve both the *O'Niel's* flight recorder and the body—no matter how badly decomposed—for forensic analysis (Weyland-Yutani hopes that they will find some trace of xenobiological material within it).

WEYLAND-YUTANI STARSHIP SS ICHIMOKU: Several years ago, a Weyland-Yutani commerce-protection vessel called *Ichimoku* was reputed to be ferrying technical parts and "raw materials" to Deep Void facilities in the Outer Rim. Sources within the corporate underworld suggest the Jĭngtì Lóng Corporation sent a frigate to ambush the *Ichimoku* during one of these covert transport missions, causing the ship to crash on an uncharted asteroid beyond the Frontier. If Jĭngtì Lóng's agents haven't already gotten to it, its top-secret cargo should still be aboard.

MISSION 2:

OPERATION ARCTURIAN APOCALYPSE

THE GUARDIAN BELT, ARCTURUS

When a murderous bioterrorist cult takes hostages in the Arcturian Grand Kivas, the PCs are called in to restore order. Known as the Children of the Two Divines, this cult is falsely accused of being xenophobes when in fact they worship the Engineers. The Children are using the hostage situation as cover to search for a buried Engineer temple on Arcturus. Deep Void wants the temple as well. They have a xenoarchaeologist embedded with the hostages to secure Engineer genetic secrets. With those secrets in hand, Deep Void will use them to weaponize Xenomorph XX121.

GEAR UP

The PCs are supplied with rebreather masks (Air Supply 2) and two Armat Type 4 Assault Breaching Charges. They have access to their APC and standard gear for this mission. They can requisition whatever other equipment they think they may need, but as quartermaster that's up to MU/TH/UR 9000 (i.e. you) to decide if it's warranted or not.

WHAT THE HELL IS REALLY GOING ON?

The bioterrorists are not xenophobic—the Children of the Two Divines don't fear alien life, they worship it. Jannes Ruedi and his top agent Mother Mishka are looking for an ancient Engineer temple they believe is buried beneath the Grand Kivas.

UAAC Command did not issue orders about Tejal Ahluwalia—they don't even know who she is. Deep Void intel informed General Vaughn that the Children were going to attack Arcturus, looking for the Engineer temple. Vaughn allowed the Children to make their move, placing Geholgod xenoarchaeologist Ahluwalia on site as a cooperative hostage. Working for Deep Void's Project Life Force, Ahluwalia will covertly catalog any Engineer data the Children unearth.

The Blackguard are listening in on the PCs' comms, waiting to move in once the hostages are free. They will collect artifacts, clean up loose ends, and cover up any signs of Deep Void's involvement.

WHAT'S THE SITUATION, MU/TH/UR?

Making an unscheduled emergency stop over Arcturus, the PCs are quickly brought up to speed by their CO.

"The main settlement on Arcturus has been seized by xenophobic bioterrorists called the Children of the Two Divines. These extremists are led by this crackpot—Jannes Ruedi [show the players the pic on page 212]. Intel says they intend to wipe out Arcturian culture by destroying their art and relics. Their ship made a low approach over the planetside Trading Outpost and dropped a drum of QTC on the USCMC station—killing 27 of our own.

At last report they've massacred over 240 Arcturians and humans at the planet's cultural center, the Grand Kivas. They've flooded the area with CN-20 nerve gas and taken three dozen locals hostage as shields. On top of that, we think they have a nuke.

Get in there, free the hostages, take Jannes and his top lieutenants alive for interrogation, and secure any surviving relics for protection. We need to keep civilian casualties at an absolute minimum—the politics surrounding Arcturus are... sensitive. We just can't have the shit hitting the fan here.

One of the hostages is a Geholgod Institute brain—Tejal Ahluwalia. Apparently, she's connected to a UAAC special project division. We want all the hostages to come home but protecting her and whatever sensitive data she carries is paramount. Don't fuck this up, marines—this order comes from UAAC Command direct.

As soon as you have the hostages free, call it in. We'll have two squads and four dropships standing by to evac the civis."

WHERE THE ENEMIES ARE

There are two dozen fanatical Children of the Two Divines spread thinly across the Guardian Belt area.

- **Children roam the Guardian Belt (map on the next page), using stolen XT-37 Stinger Fast Attack Vehicles. There are two XT-37s crewed by two Children each in the Flatlands. One single driver XT-37 guards the Main Gate to the Grands Kivas and another patrols the carved roadways of the Grand Kivas.**
- **Four Children are on foot patrol throughout the Grand Kivas, blowing things up and looking for entrances to the Arctura Tunnels. Another two guard their ship, the SS *Penitent Man*.**
- **Four Firstborn—the elite members of the Children of the Two Divines—guard the hostages in the Audience Chamber on the Center Kivas map, while another two watch over the Annex. Two more wander the Arctura Tunnels (page 252).**
- **Within the Engineer's temple (map on page 256), two Firstborn guard the last of the hostages at the Green Crystal. Another watches over Tejal in the Orrery, and one more is setting up a small nuke in the Sanctuary. Jannes Ruedi, Mother Mishka, and two final Firstborn are within the Hall of Crypts.**
- **Roving Arctura abound—six near the Sonic Fence, three in the Arctura Tunnels and a dozen more curious about the Engineers' Temple (see Events on page 260).**
- **The Blackguards are monitoring the PCs' comms and will move in once the terrorist threat has been largely neutralized. Their Berserker may pursue errant bioterrorists into the Engineer temple and will become a threat if he goes berserk.**
- **Finally, a panicked Engineer tears through the Engineer Temple while on fire, desperate to dive into water and put himself out.**

A NOTE FROM MU/TH/UR: Brief your players on Arcturus, the Arcturians, and the Arctura from the information on page 145 accordingly. ■

METAPUZZLE PIECES

While Frontier War missions can be played in any order, escalating campaign clues called Epiphanies occur in a predetermined sequence (see the Metapuzzle on page 193).

Relevant metapuzzle pieces for this mission can be learned from Geholgod Institute Xeno-archeologist Tejal Ahluwalia, her P-DAT and Modular Computing Device, Engineer temple artifacts and scans, Sergeant Lance, and Mother Mishka.

The Berserker unit's appearance is evidence of the Berserker program (page 166).

INSERTION

The dropship will drop off the team's APC in the Flatlands to avoid detection by the Children. From there it's up to the PCs how they want to tackle this—drive through the Buttes, leave the APC outside the Grand Kivas and go in on foot, or drive through the Flatlands right into the Grand Kivas proper.

THE GUARDIAN BELT

The only year-round habitable zone on Arcturus is the planet's beautiful equatorial region. Dubbed the Guardian Belt, the equator is composed of arid, rocky terrain punctuated by sparkling mica-flaked buttes, mesas, and placid mirror lakes under shimmering aurora-filled skies. Only here does the planet experience day and night—but with the sun always low on the horizon, keeping the environment in a state of perpetual twilight. While surface vegetation in the Belt is limited to ultraviolet shrubs and mosses, the cave and tunnel-riddled terrain is teeming with native mushrooms and cave crustaceans while the freshwater lakes are full of indigenous fishes. See the map to the left.

FLATLAND STAR TEACHER SIGNS: The terrain of the Guardian Belt is normally covered in glittering luminescent silicates that reflect the auroras, causing a shimmering effect on the terrain. In the Flatlands, most of the ground is dark—as if the lustrous rocks were picked clean from the area. They were gathered centuries ago and arranged to create kilometers-long phosphorus geoglyphs etched in the rocky terrain throughout the area.

These giant pictographs depict Arcturians bowing before giants with enormous heads and chiseled features, some kind of bipedal, long-headed crucified demon, and more. The most prevalent image is that of a giant horseshoe-shape. The symbols are so large that they are best seen from the air or orbit.

A pair of roving teams, each comprised of two Children of the Two Divines (below), patrol the area in stolen XT-37 Stinger Fast Attack Vehicles. After seeing the PCs' dropship, one of the XT-37s will come to investigate.

If a high-speed chase begins, the second XT-37 will also follow. These Children will use the XT-37's missiles in an attempt to cripple the APC and take the marines hostage. If they succeed in capturing them, the PCs will be taken to the Center Kivas.

BUTTES: These hills are flat-topped and elevated landforms with steep sides. The Arcturians live in housing carved out of the sides of these buttes. All these dwellings are closed, their occupants huddling in fear.

THE CHILDREN

In the Flatlands, at the Grand Kivas Main Gate, and on the Grand Kivas roadways, the Children will be driving XT-37 vehicles. Otherwise, they will be on foot. As a whole, the Children intend to kill any military or law enforcement they find, including the PCs. If the PCs surrender—or pretend to—this will confuse the Children. They will instead take the PCs to the Center Kivas as hostages. If coerced or threatened with violence, the Children will give up some information—the hostages are being held in the Center Kivas, and Jannes has them looking for entrances into underground tunnels.

STRENGTH 2, AGILITY 3, WITS 2, EMPATHY 4

HEALTH: 2

SKILLS: Close Combat 2, Piloting 2, Ranged Combat 1, Observation 2, Manipulation 3

TALENT: Hothead

GEAR: Black Market F903WE Assault Rifle, pocket copy of the Jannes Ruedi Dream Journals (page 218), two doses of X-Stims, rebreather mask.

BUTTE PASS: There is a large pass between the Buttes that leads to the Grand Kivas Residential Gate. If the PCs take the Butte pass to the Residential Gate, they can bypass the Children's final two XT-37 Stinger patrols at the Grand Kivas main gate and on the Carved Roadways.

Just inside Butte Pass is a smooth field of mud—a once cracked area of desert earth has been moistened by the recent rain. As the APC enters the area, the driver must make a successful **PILOTING** roll to avoid having the vehicle become mired in the muck. If unsuccessful, the PCs will have to force the APC out of the mud.

There is a sturdy outcropping of rock 20 meters away. To pull the APC out, the PCs will need to tie a cable around it, make a **STAMINA** roll (one PC rolls, others can help) to push it out of the mud while the driver makes a **PILOTING** roll. If either roll fails, the PCs will need to abandon the APC and continue on foot.

A successful **OBSERVATION** roll while this is going on reveals bugs writhing in the mud, slowly digging themselves out and cleaning themselves off—Arcturian Grain Parasites (page 247). They soon swarm and attack the PCs, looking for food.

MESA CANYON: W-Y owns a large section of land in the Belt they've dubbed Mesa Canyon—a massive chasm where they grow a multitude of mushroom types in subterranean fungal farms. Here, W-Y cultivates the planet's many varieties of mushrooms for food, medicine, and entertainment.

TRADING OUTPOST: W-Y established a UA sanctioned trading post on the edge of their land where native peoples can trade and mingle with offworlders. A collection of bars, clubs, and markets, where under normal circumstances merchants can barter with friendly Arcturians for art, science, and medicine. Trade has been light since the 2160s, but is now expanding quickly as war-time traffic increases on the Arcturus Loop. This area is completely dead. Under normal conditions, a shuttle bus ferries personnel from the Grand Kivas to the Outpost and back as needed. Now it sits parked in the Kivas instead.

STATION: A small planetside colonial marine station protects the farm settlement and trading post from hostile lifeforms. Typically, a platoon of colonial marines is stationed here—but the terrorists dropped a barrel of QTC on them right before they landed. The station is a burning torch.

SONIC FENCE: The Perimeter is protected from attacks by sonic deterrents that drive away the Arctura. Anyone getting within a few meters (one zone) of the barrier without ear protection must roll **STAMINA** each Round or suffer +1 **STRESS LEVEL** and make a Panic roll.

Eight highly stressed human Weyland-Yutani Fungi Farmers have snuck out of the Kivas and into this area to escape the Children. Although they are unaware, the farmers are being stalked by a curious den of six Arctura. The Arctura are timid, only throwing rocks that bounce off the APC or farmers, or marines—unless they are fired upon. Then they attack. The Arctura will avoid the fence at all costs.

COLONIAL RIG: Suspended 100 meters off the canyon floor on stilts that raise it up to ground level, the rig is six stories tall. Home to the 2,000 farmers and administrators that live at Mesa Canyon, the rig is on lockdown due to the terrorist threat—no one in or out. Conveyor belts bring cultivated fungi from the caves to the sublevel 06 processor, package it on sublevel 05, and store it on sublevel 04. Sublevels 02 and 03 are cage housing for the farm workers and sublevel 01 is administration and security. If you wish to use the rig at a later time, it has the same general layout as the Darwin Island rig on page 340, minus the weapons systems or defenses.

BIONATIONAL FARMS: This abandoned bioengineered wheat farm was attacked by grain parasites and burnt down in 2177. If the PCs decide to come here, they will encounter a muddy field with the next crop of grain parasites slowly stirring awake.

LAKES : These still-water lakes reflect the skies above and are teeming with game fish. They feed underground rivers, one of which leads to the Engineer temple.

THE GRAND KIVAS: The center of Arcturian culture. For more details, see page 248.

MAIN GATE: This isn't a gate so much as a ramped entrance leading down to the Carved Roadways. A XT-37 Stinger crewed by only one of the Children is parked across the main entrance to the Grand Kivas.

RESIDENTIAL GATE: A large pass between the Buttes that goes around the city proper will take the PCs to this unguarded entrance to the Grand Kivas.

FUNGI FARMERS

These farmers are ordinary people on the verge of panic. When they see the PCs, they will be overjoyed that the cavalry has come. The farmers will tell the PCs that there is nerve gas everywhere in the Kivas and the fanatics are blowing things up. They've managed to avoid a few fanatic vehicle patrols on their way through the flatlands. They will recommend the PCs take the Butte Pass and come up at the Residential Gate of the Grand Kivas to avoid further patrols.

STRENGTH 5, AGILITY 2 WITS 2, EMPATHY 3

HEALTH: 5

SKILLS: Close Combat 1, Heavy Machinery 3, Stamina 2, Comtech 1

TALENT: True Grit

GEAR: Multi-Tool.

ARCTURIAN GRAIN PARASITES

The result of an invasive species cross-breeding with native insects, the Arcturian grain parasite was last seen in 2177—when they laid waste to Bionational's cereal grain farms on Arcturus. The parasites lay their larvae in the mud, where they incubate on a seven year cycle before emerging again.

SPEED: 1 per zone

HEALTH: 3 per zone

ARMOR RATING: When clustered, impervious to all attacks but fire, electricity, and pesticides.

ATTACK: These fat, 10-centimeter long weevils emerge from the ground starving. They aren't interested in eating anything but cereal grain, but will attack in search of it and to defend themselves. They attack en masse with six base dice, Damage 1. In addition, these grain parasites will cluster and crawl all over a target in groups of hundreds, causing asphyxiation (page 110 of the core rulebook).

CLUSTER RULES: The size and speed of a cluster of grain parasites is measured by the number of zones it covers. The Health of a cluster is equal to 3 times the number of zones it covers. If the cluster's Health drops to zero it disperses.

THE GRAND KIVAS

While Arcturian warrens are built into the sides of buttes and mesas, they have also constructed a number of stepped temples for stellar calculations, sprawling aqueducts, and a single massive city-center—a giant community square amongst the Butte warrens. Called the Grand Kivas, these open pits resemble crop circles cut into stone. Arcturian art and culture revolves around the concept of the Star Teachers—giants from other worlds who last visited them millennia ago.

The Arcturians normally gather at the Grand Kivas to greet star travelers at the sight of a starship entering orbit, hoping they herald the Star Teachers' return. The Children of the Two Divines have dumped a huge cache of CN-20 nerve agent, throughout the Grand Kivas. The agent was released hours ago, so **STAMINA** rolls to resist it are only made each Turn (instead of Round). The PCs can get rebreather masks out of the APC, or take one from each of the Children they encounter anywhere. Covered in a low hanging mist of vaporized nerve gas, the area is a silent ghost town.

Four Children roam throughout the Grand Kivas area, all wearing rebreather masks and Armat 4 Breaching Charges. They have blown up several structures in what may seem like random chaos—but they are actually looking for a way into the Arctura Tunnels.

A NOTE FROM MU/TH/UR: If the PCs reach the Grand Kivas through the Butte pass, they will be unnoticed by the Children until they attack someone—the Children are unaware of that passage and are not patrolling it. Doing this bypasses the Children's XT-37 Stinger patrol at the main gate and the final XT-37 roaming the Carved Roadways on the Grand Kivas map).

If asked where the hostages are, any random civilians (of which there aren't many out) or the Children (if captured) will say the Center Kivas. ■

KIVAS: These large circular pits accommodate starships and are connected to the Arcturian greeting chambers.

SHUTTLE BUS: In the smallest of the pits sits the Grand Kivas/Mesa Canyon shuttle bus—a WY-37B Cargo Lifter Transport Sled (page 146 of the core rulebook). The lifter is fitted with personnel compartments to seat 48 passengers. It is shut down but can be started easily. It needs two Rounds to warm up before it can take flight. The PCs could use this to get the hostages out of the Center Kivas.

CARVED ROADWAYS: The roads are carved into the bedrock and depressed two meters deep from ground level. There is one last XT-37 Stinger vehicle on these roads, crewed by only one of the Children.

CENTER KIVAS: Entry to the Arctura Tunnels can be found here, through the wall of one of the Annex rooms. For details and threats, see the Center Kivas below.

SS PENITENT MAN: The ship of the Children of the Two Divines—SS *Penitent Man*—sits in the pit east of the Center Kivas, along with dozens of Arcturian and human bodies. This Corvus Salvage Vessel was damaged by the Marines stationed here before they were killed. There are two Children armed with black market F903WE Automatic Assault Rifles guarding it, forcing eight Arcturian roughnecks to repair the damage.

MAIN GATE: This is shown on the Guardian Belt map and described on page 246.

RESIDENTIAL GATE: This is shown on the Guardian Belt map and described on page 246.

THE CENTER KIVAS

Adorned with bas reliefs and stone statues, the Center Kivas is a domed structure within an open Kivas pit. The interior walls and ceilings are covered in colorful symbols and paintings. There is no CN-20 gas inside. The Children here are the Firstborn. They will tell the PCs it's too late—Grand Seer Ruedi and Mother Mishka have already found the gateway to heaven (see the Arcturan Tunnel entrance in the Annex).

FIRSTBORN CHILDREN

These elite Children are trained combat veterans that Jannes and Mishka call the Firstborn. These are willing to die for the cause. All Children encountered within the Center Kivas, the Arctura Tunnels (page 252) and the Engineer Temple will be Firstborn.

STRENGTH 4, AGILITY 3, WITS 2, EMPATHY 5

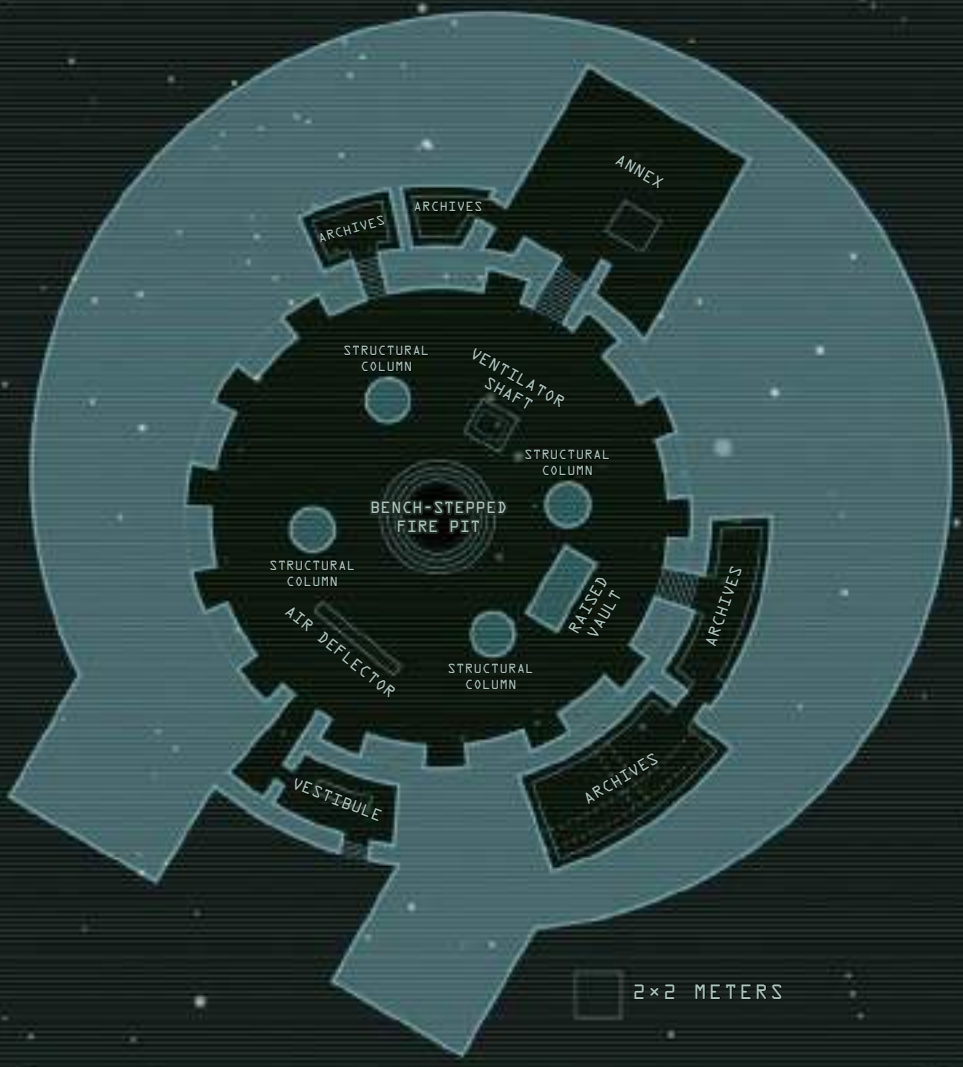
HEALTH: 4

SKILLS: Close Combat 4, Mobility 2, Ranged Combat 3, Manipulation 3

TALENT: Nerves of Steel

GEAR: Black market F903WE Assault Rifle, six doses of X-Stims, a razor blade hidden in each shoe, rebreather mask, Armat 4 breaching charge strapped to their chest.

THE CENTER KIVAS



PLAYER MAP

VESTIBULE: This is the Weyland-Yutani inspection office that normally processes newcomers and directs them onwards to the trading post. The corpses of three administrators litter the floor. They have a combined total of $200W-Y in their pockets.

ANNEX: The Annex doorway is blocked with a waist-high drum of CN-20 Nerve Agent and has two rebreather-wearing Children with F903WE Automatic Assault Rifles on guard. If the Children guarding the Annex are under attack, they will kick over the drum of CN-20 into the audience chamber. The CN-20 will begin to vaporize—exposing everyone in the room to the nerve agent. Shooting the drum will cause the same effect, but torching the drum will neutralize it within three Rounds.

A large hole has been blown into the Annex wall here, leading into the Arctura Tunnels. The Children's leaders entered this hole and are deep into the tunnel network beneath the Kivas, in search of the entrance to a hidden Engineer temple—the real reason they are here. If asked, any captured Children or hostages will inform the PCs that the Children's leaders took hostages and proceeded into the tunnels. If the PCs enter the Arctura Tunnels, see page 252.

ARCHIVES: Each of these archive rooms contains a rack of P-DATs (colony inventory records) and rows of rolled parchment records. There is mostly nothing of interest here.

In the first archive room the PCs enter, they will find one of those parchments has been crumpled up and thrown in the corner—it's a five-hundred-year-old map of the Center Kivas that shows there was once a tunnel system under it, with the Annex marked as a doorway to the Arctura Tunnels.

AUDIENCE CHAMBER: This round room is the main meeting hall of the Arcturian Assembly. Twenty-eight hostages are seated here in the center of the room, guarded by four Firstborn Children. This is the potential big firefight scene of the mission. The trick here will be to take out the Children without harming the hostages—through sniper fire, subterfuge, or a straight on frontal assault. PCs looking for Tejal will realize she is not there.

When freed, one of the Arcturian hostages named Anders (next page) will approach the PCs. Anders says the Children in charge—Ruedi and Mother Mishka—took the remaining eight hostages with them. They escaped through a tunnel they opened in the Annex. Anders will explain about the Arctura tunnels that run underneath the Kivas. Anders will tell the PCs that these fanatics seemed very interested in archive records concerning architecture and artifacts.

There was a scientist amongst the hostages named Tejal who was more than helpful to the Children—assisting them in finding any artifact information they were looking for. While she did make their lives easier, it was clear she really was a hostage.

Anders believes the Children are actually thieves and the hostage situation was a ruse—there is probably a treasure trove of Arcturian artifacts in those tunnels. A native who has spent time in Arctura tunnels, Anders will offer to lead the PCs in.

VENTILATOR SHAFT: This vertical shaft runs from the roof straight down into the Audience Chamber. It is wide enough for a human stripped of armor and gear (pulse rifle or pistol allowed) to slip through. Alternatively, it can be used to toss something into the chamber, such as a G2 Electroshock grenade (page 124 of the core rulebook).

BENCH-STEPPED FIRE PIT: This stepped fire pit is carved into the floor with stone seating. The center itself is ablaze with an Intensity 7 fire.

STRUCTURAL COLUMNS: These columns hold the Kivas up—if more than one is destroyed, the structure will collapse. They can each take 10 points of damage before collapsing.

AIR DEFLECTOR: This keeps the fire from blowing out in the center of the room. It has the added benefit of acting as a defense point with an Armor Rating of 6.

RAISED VAULT: The raised vault contains mushroom and wine stores. The Children have put a bomb on top of this vault—anyone examining it closely who makes a successful **COMTECH** roll will realize it is a fake. After this is discovered, either the hostages or one of the surviving Children will tell the PCs that their leader took the real bomb into the tunnels.

A NOTE FROM MU/TH/UR: To pursue Ruedi and Miskha, the PCs must find the Arcturian Tunnel entrance in the Annex or be told about it by Anders, the Children, or any hostage (see the Annex and Audience Chamber). If the PCs update the Tamb'Itam once the Center Kivas is secured, their CO will send dropships and additional marines to evac the hostages. The eavesdropping Blackguard will then take over the scene—after the PCs have gone into the tunnels (see the event Berserk to the MAX!). ■

ANDERS KEWKWAXA'WE

ARCTURIAN ROUGHNECK

Gender-fluid, Anders acts more like a typical crass roughneck than what one would expect from a native Arcturian. They are willing to do whatever they can to help with the crisis, but will back away from any firefight unless they have no choice. Like all Arcturians, Anders has extremely pale skin, big black pupils with barely any whites visible, braided jet-black hair, and no eyebrows. For more on Arcturians, see page 145.

STRENGTH 3, AGILITY 4, WITS 4, EMPATHY 3

HEALTH: 3

SKILLS: Heavy Machinery 3, Mobility 2, Comtech 1, Observation 3, Survival 1

TALENT: Resilient

GEAR: F903WE Rexim RXF-M5 EVA Pistol, mechanical cutting tools, edible mushrooms.

ARCTURA TUNNELS

These rough-hewn tunnels are a deadly maze under the Grand Kivas used by the savage Arctura. In most cases there are one- to two-meter-high dirt ceilings overhead, but they can reach a height of four meters.

When the PCs make it through the Tunnel Chart in pursuit of Jannes' Children, they will end up at the entrance to a long-buried Engineer Temple—another hole blown in the wall by the Children of the Two Divines. Along the way they will encounter natural hazards, Arctura, Children, and traps set by both factions.

USING THE TUNNEL CHARTS

The chart to the right is designed to make a spontaneous random map for the Arctura Tunnels. When the PCs enter the Arcturian Tunnels, either roll randomly on the chart or pick from the options presented to determine what makes the most sense for the PCs' current situation.

Roll D66 once to determine each tunnel and another D66 to determine the trap, hazard or encounter the PCs find there. After each tunnel section explored, roll a D6 and add the number of tunnels the PCs have already explored. If the total is 10 or more the PCs have managed to navigate the tunnels successfully to an exit, barring the Dead End result.

Each tunnel journey must be completed to travel between any two exit points. These confusing tunnels themselves aren't initially mapped, instead relying on the charts below. Encourage your players to create their own map as they traverse them—otherwise they will need to consult the chart again on the return trip.

ARCTURA TUNNEL CHART

D66	TUNNEL LAYOUT	DANGER LEVEL
11–16	Straight Passage. FEATURES: Dark	ENCOUNTER: Ambush from behind: Three Active Arctura have followed the PCs into the tunnels and attack from behind. Treat this like a sneak attack.
21–26	Straight Partially Collapsed Passage. FEATURES: Dark, Cramped	CHILDREN TRAP: Fragmentation IED, Blast Power 6, Medium Range. The IED is automatically noticed if the PCs are actively looking for traps. If not, a successful OBSERVATION roll spots it. Otherwise, it is triggered by the marine leading the way. Can be disarmed with a HEAVY MACHINERY roll.
31–34	90-degree Right Turn Partially Collapsed. FEATURES: Dark, Cramped, Blind Corner*	TRAP: Arctura crude punji stick pit. Spotted with a successful OBSERVATION roll or triggered by the first character who suffers 1 damage. Avoided if spotted.
35–42	90-degree Left Turn Rubble Strewn. FEATURES: Dark, Cluttered, Blind Corner*	CLEAR: No danger at this section. Stick figure cave paintings of a giant playing a flute while Arcturian people transform into monsters adorn the wall.
43–46	Z-Passage. FEATURES: Dark, two Blind Corners*	HAZARD, UNSTABLE TUNNEL: A muffled explosion somewhere ahead shakes and weakens this section of tunnel until it begins to collapse. Each character makes a successful MOBILITY roll to outrun the falling debris. Failure means suffering an attack rolled with six Base Dice. If anyone in the group rolls a , the passage behind them becomes impassable. On their way out, they will have to go a different route.
51–54	T-Junction. FEATURES: Dark, two paths	CLEAR: No danger at this section.
55–62	Chamber, 25m x 25m area. FEATURES: Dark	HAZARD, UNSTABLE FOOTING: An explosive device set off by the Children ahead rocks the tunnel. The floor here collapses into a 10m deep chasm. A successful MOBILITY roll is required to work around the crumbling edge. Failure means the character falls and suffers 5m of falling damage (see page 108 of the core rulebook).
63–66	CHASM: Tunnel drops down 6m before continuing. Successful MOBILITY roll is required to climb up or down this shaft. FEATURES: Dark	ENCOUNTER: Two PASSIVE Firstborn Children are up ahead, wandering the tunnels in search of the PCs.

*BLIND CORNER: Gives cover with Armor Rating 4.

TEMPLE OF THE ENGINEERS

To reach the Temple, the PCs must first navigate through the Arctura Tunnels. This series of chambers begins in a large natural cavern with a vaulted ceiling and arch supports.

Stepping out of the claustrophobic Arctura Tunnels and into the cavernous temple is like entering another world—the ceilings are several stories high and the stone itself seems to be laced with structural fibers that create weird biomechanical patterns—almost like a weave of resins and metals was somehow integrated with the rock itself.

As shown on the map, there is natural water flowing through the area, so there's a lot of moisture and the constant sound of dripping—conditions that make it ideal for Popping Fungi (page 259). Its hair-like structure is draped over the walls and statues at the Green Crystal Fountain, the Hall of Heads, and the Sanctuary.

GRAND STEPS: This ten-meter-wide stone stairway descends into the vaulted Hall of Heads, diverting around the green crystal fountain to converge again before reaching the cavern floor.

GREEN CRYSTAL FOUNTAIN: This fountain is fed by water that rains down from fissures in the ceiling above, flowing over the seven-meter-tall slab of jagged green crystal at its center. The crystal is a power amplifier—if an explosion happens near it, the Blast Power is increased by 3. Two **PASSIVE** Firstborn Children with F903WE assault rifles hold seven human hostages here. They are sitting on the fountain's edge and cannot hear the PCs enter due to the running water—unless, of course, the PCs are really loud.

HALL OF HEADS: Six massive nine-meter-tall heads with deep, chiseled, grim expressions serve as pillars in this vaulted cavern. They are positioned so that no matter where a visitor stands in the hall, at least one of the faces stares at them disapprovingly. There are three dark tunnel exits from this cavern—each one leads to the same corridor that loops around the temple.

CORRIDOR: This six-meter-wide and equally tall curved corridor connects the hall of heads with the rest of the temple. The walls and ceiling seem to be lined with some kind of large animal ribs coated with a thick layer of sprayed-on organic polymer—a pitch black glistening "skin" that drips with condensation.

There is a faint hum of power in the corridor. There are two doors here, to the Ampule Room and the Orrery. Each door has a niche in the wall about two meters up, with a rubbery, phosphorus fleshy egg-shaped control right above it. Pressing an egg will open the corresponding door.

THE AMPULE ROOM: Hieroglyphics are carved across the entire surface of the sealed door to this chamber. As the vault opens, a rush of soot and ash hits the PCs—the interior looks like someone torched the place a long time ago and it has sat vacuum-sealed since the fire burned the room's oxygen out. There are what appear to be little metal stools or containers throughout the room (steatite ampules), but they are buckled and cracked from being exposed to extreme heat, many long years ago.

A single charred giant stone head is the centerpiece of this room. Behind it on the far wall is what looks like a metal bass relief depiction of a crucified creature (an alien) emerging from some liquid—very similar to one of the star signs in the Flatlands. The relief is actually a door to a passageway which leads to the Orrery. A successful **OBSERVATION** roll will indicate this door simply needs to be pushed. The metal slab will depress and slide into the wall next to it. The portal will seal shut behind the PCs and is unopenable from the other side.

ORRERY: A giant mechanical model of the Arcturian star system dominates the room. The giant metal orbs which represent the star and planets all have hieroglyphics covering them completely. Anyone entering this room from the secret passageway will arrive undetected by the occupants within.

A Firstborn is here guarding the hostage Tejal Ahluwalia. She is using a P-DAT that is taking record of all the room's hieroglyphics via a Modular Computing Device (page 132 of the core rulebook) situated in the center of the room. The Firstborn's 3WEF90 rifle is slung over his shoulder.

If the PCs came from the Ampule Room, this counts as an automatic sneak attack (page 90 in the core rulebook). If they came from the Corridor, draw initiative as per usual. As combat begins, the startled Tejal will drop her P-DAT. If the Firstborn survives the first Round, he will attempt to use Tejal as a human shield to escape. She will try to dive for the P-DAT and the Modular Computing Device, giving the PCs another open shot.

Tejal will confirm that the leader Jannes Ruedi and his second in command Mother Mishka are ahead. The xenoarchaeologist has been helping the Children so that they don't hurt anyone—herself included. Tejal says Mishka seems to be running the show. Tejal believes the PCs to be part of Deep Void as well. She can inadvertently deliver the next part of the Metapuzzle to the PCs.

On the cracked P-DAT screen, the hieroglyphics have been converted to musical notes. The P-DAT will prompt the user "Would you like to play reconstructed composition?" Pressing play causes the P-DAT to produce a flute song—a haunting tune which activates machinery in the room.

The mechanical model will begin moving on its gyros, shifting its spheres to new positions that causes them all to align. A massive blue-white holographic map will appear, dominating the entire room. Depending on what you are looking for, it either appears to be a star map or a genetic one. Whatever it is, it's part of what the Children are here looking for.

If neither Tejal nor the PCs play the P-DAT composition here, that's okay too—as long as they take it or the Modular Computing Device with them for analysis after the mission.

A NOTE FROM MU/TH/UR: Actually, the holographic map in the Orrery is both a star map and a genetic one—but the PCs won't know that for certain now. Project Life Force looks to use the genetic portion of the map, and it will be exploited as a star chart by Mishka and Maitland in the campaign finale, Operation Octopus Garden. ■

TEJAL AHLUWALIA

DEEP VOID GEHOLGOD INSTITUTE XENOARCHEOLOGIST

A stern Pakistani woman in her thirties, Tejal is impatient, has a temper, and is actually a former Geholgod xenoarchaeologist now working for Deep Void, put in place here to help the Children find the Engineer temple and make records and take scans of whatever they might unearth. The Children don't know that Tejal is a Deep Void plant, and they plan to take her with them when this is over. Tejal has been very helpful to Jannes and the Children, hoping to capitalize on what they find as well. She is also the curator of General Vaughn's personal collection of Engineer artifacts (kept in secret on Darwin Island), so she knows a lot about what Deep Void is looking for.

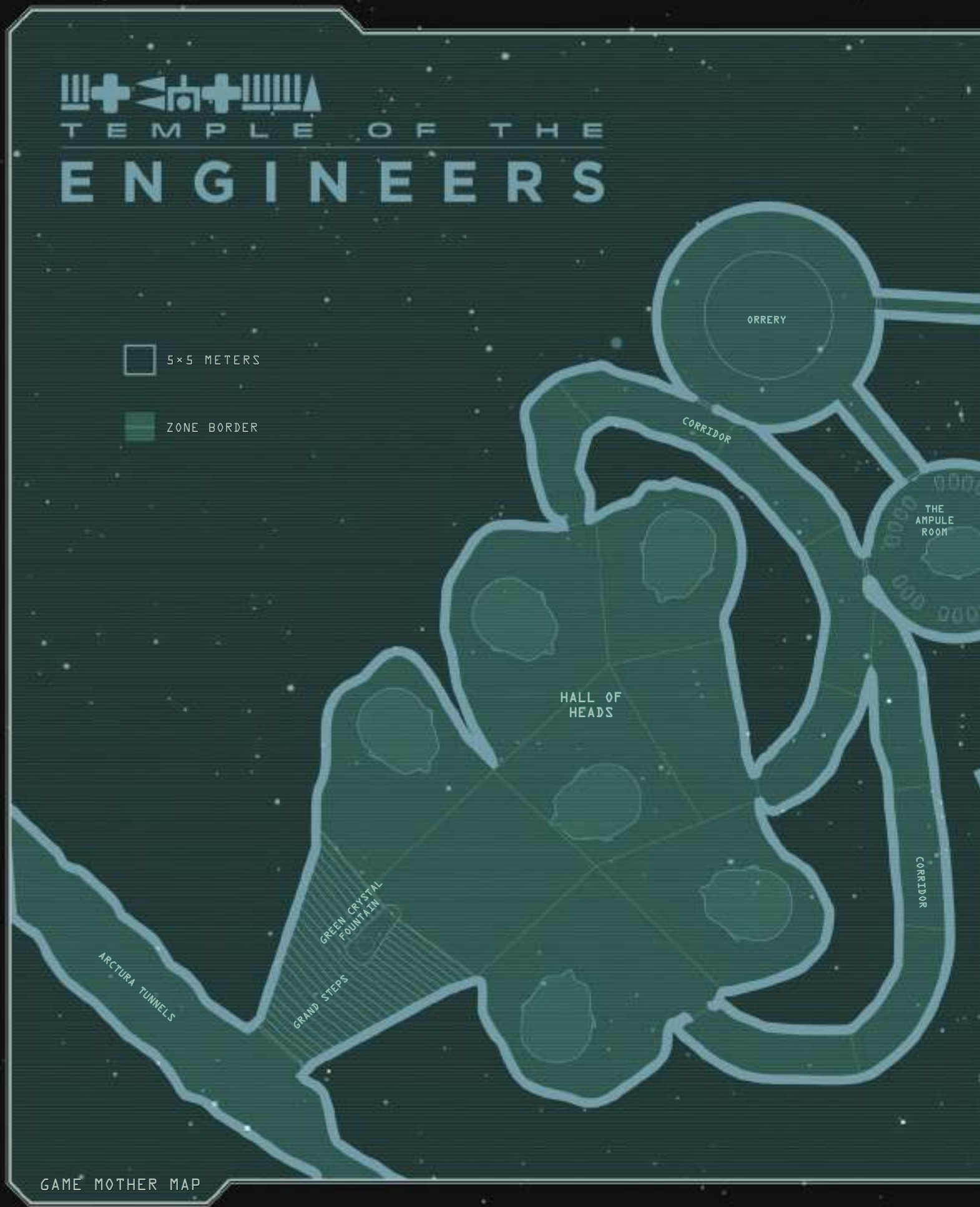
STRENGTH 3, AGILITY 4, WITS 5, EMPATHY 2

HEALTH: 3

SKILLS: Comtech 3, Observation 5

TALENT: Analysis

GEAR: Satchel with P-DAT and Modular Computing Device.



GAME MOTHER MAP

GRAND GALLERY
UNDERGROUND RIVER
SANCTUARY
ANTECHAMBER
ALTAR
HALL OF CRYPTS
WATERFALL

GRAND GALLERY: This two meters wide, 50 meters long and nine meters high passageway slants upward from the Orrery at a steep incline. As the PCs start to climb up the Gallery, they can hear a dull white noise coming from above. The smooth passage is completely devoid of hieroglyphs. As the PCs near the top, the sound becomes a crashing roar, accompanied by a cool breeze.

SANCTUARY: This massive chamber has a partially vaulted ceiling that bleeds right into the natural rock. There is a massive waterfall that plummets to an underground river some 30 meters below. No one can hear anyone in this area due to the echo-amplified roaring of the water.

On an outcropping of rock extended out over the waterfall is an altar, and on the ground near it is a cup, dusty covered and empty. Both the cup and the altar have hieroglyphics written on them.

The Popping Fungi is thick on the altar here and along the river rocks. The cup has a clutch of three Popping Fungi growing near it. Anyone who picks up the cup will be blasted by its spores.

ANTECHAMBER: The walls of this path are lined with what looks to be three-meter-tall statues of humanoids with ribbed bodies, bulbous heads and a short trunk. These are withered and inoperative Engineer suits. If touched, the suit feels like shed skin on an old corpse. The suits are too cumbersome to move unless two marines decide to carry it like a body. Command and Intel will be impressed with the find and immediately classify it.

POPPING FUNGI

This oily black fungus looks like hair dangling over walls, arches and statues in the Engineer temple—its coarse fibers concealing a golf ball-sized seed pod. Detecting motion within SHORT range, the pod will pop, spreading a spore which painfully burns the eyes and blurs vision. A victim without eye protection needs to make a STAMINA roll. Failure means they suffer –3 to OBSERVATION and RANGED COMBAT for one Turn. The victim must make an immediate Panic Roll. A medkit and a successful MEDICAL AID roll will return the victim's vision to normal.

A NOTE FROM MU/TH/UR: PCs who are exposed to the Popping Fungi and have previously encountered the Neomorph will likely worry they've just been infected by Neomorphic Motes (page 293 of the core rule book). Increase their STRESS LEVEL another +1. ■

HALL OF CRYPTS: This hall can be entered through the Antechamber or the Sanctuary. Six standing, stone-covered sarcophagi line the walls—three on either side. Each stone coffin has hieroglyphics all over the lid. When the PCs arrive, the crypt is guarded by two First-born Children who are more interested in what Jannes is doing than in guarding (+2 to sneak attack). Jannes and Mishka are inside.

Two of these vertical sarcophagi/cryopods have been opened, their stone slabs broken on the floor. One of them is empty. Inside the other is a towering desiccated corpse similar in size and appearance to the statues, but with a humanoid head. This is a long dead Engineer in a biosuit with a rebreather mask (see page 288 of the core rulebook).

The final four sarcophagi contain Engineers suspended in cryosleep—and these cryopods are on the verge of malfunctioning.

Three of the sarcophagi are closed and dark, but a deep steady heartbeat can be heard coming from each of them. Light comes from the last sarcophagus at the far end—it's active and open. Jannes stands before it, wearing a Neuro Visor. There are wires jury-rigged to a portable battery backpack, connecting the visor to the Engineer's sarcophagus.

Jannes is using the Neuro Visor Mishka stole from her time with Project Morana to sync with the Engineer's mind and read his dreams—a really bad idea. At a dramatically appropriate moment, Jannes screams—his eyes, ears, and nose bleeding as he rips the helmet from his head. He will go berserk. Ignoring Mishka and the slumbering Engineer, he immediately attacks the next nearest person or creature, friendly or not. Jannes won't stop until he or the target is Broken. He will stay in this mad state until Broken or knocked out. Remember: The PCs are ordered to bring him back alive.

The feedback from Jannes' Neuro Visor causes the four Engineers' cryopods to malfunction and burst into flames. Either that can be the end of the Engineers, or the event Burning Man can occur next. If anyone examines the Neuro Visor, it is of UPP design and marked Project Morana.

Mishka will immediately surrender. She offers to lead the PCs to the nuke (it's hidden in the Sanctuary, near the altar). Once there she will leap into the waterfall, hit the rocks below, and shatter an android limb before being swept away by the fast moving underground river. Mishka survives, also appearing in Operation Dreamcatcher.

A NOTE FROM MU/TH/UR: If a PC is crazy enough to put a Neuro Visor on while it is connected to an Engineer in the Hall of Crypts, they will see into the dreams of an inhuman mind. While most of it is incomprehensible, they will see worlds created and destroyed, and they will feel extreme, overwhelming, despair and disappointment. The PC suffers +2 STRESS LEVEL and must make an immediate Panic Roll.

When the PC eventually calms down, they are haunted by flute music constantly playing in their head. They cannot relieve stress for a Shift after, but they have also gained a bonus—the PC can now read and play Engineer music, something that will make them a person of interest to Deep Void and Project Life Force. ■

EVENTS

Here are some events that you can spring on the players. The events don't all need to occur, and they don't need to occur in the order listed. Instead, see the events as an arsenal of drama for you to use as you see fit.

BOTTLED BLACK DEATH: Cast away and forgotten in some corner of the temple is a single intact steatite ampule of Accelerating Agent A0-3959X.91-15. The Children will very happily take this prize if found. The ampule can take three points of damage before breaking. If the PCs get their hands on it, the Children will fight, steal, or bargain for it. If the PCs come in direct contact with the black goo inside, they risk becoming Anathemas (page 179).

ARCTURA ATTACK: Sensing that the Kivas' defenses are down, and aware of all the activity in their tunnels, the Arctura grow bold and curious—a dozen of them enter the Engineer's Temple to claim it for their own.

THE BURNING MAN: A direct result of the cryopod malfunction fire in the Hall of Crypts, this optional event can be used to escalate the situation. The four Engineer cryopods have burst into flames due to a feedback loop caused by Jannes Ruedi's Neuro Visor incident. The Engineer he was connected to fights his way out of his pod, covered head to toe with flames. Thumping can be heard on the stone sarcophagi of the other three engineers as they suffer a similar fate.

The burning Engineer will tear through the temple, looking for water to douse himself with. Anyone seeing this flaming fury gains +1 **STRESS LEVEL**. Covered in an Intensity 9 fire, the raging dark god will attack with ten Base Dice, base Damage 2. When dramatically appropriate, the crazed Engineer will run to the Sanctuary waterfall and throw himself off the precipice into the churning river below—his body swept away and forever lost in the swirling underground currents.

BERSERK TO THE MAX! Static chatter squawks over the PCs' comms—Blackguard Sergeant Jeremy A.W. Lance has been ambushed by the Arctura! The Blackguard's Berserker chases the creatures to a cave in the Buttes—a hidden entrance to a large Arctura Tunnel. The Berserker plows through, eventually smashing its way into the Engineer Temple. Arctura scramble for cover as the PCs encounter an enraged Berserker who can bring the entire place down. It may even face the Burning Man.

A NOTE FROM MU/TH/UR: Full stats are not given nor needed for the Engineer in the Hall of Crypts. He is intended to only be a menace that dies either by PC attack or fire. As Game Mother, it's up to you to preserve their mystery. A particularly sadistic Game Mother might have the other three burning Engineers break out of their cryopods and tear around the temple as well. Whether in their pods or somewhere else in the temple, they will burn literally to ash. ■

FINALE

The final Firstborn has just set up a small nuke behind the altar in the Sanctuary. If it goes off, it will collapse the Temple. It could also damage the entire Grand Kivas above (Dealer's Choice). A **COMTECH** and a **HEAVY MACHINERY** roll are needed to disarm the bomb.

If the temple isn't sealed off or destroyed, you can be sure that Deep Void, Weyland-Yutani, and anyone else who can stick their noses in will be crawling all over it looking for things best left unfound. If the PCs make it out with Tejal, Jannes (even if he's insane) and any of the hostages along with the Modular Computing Device scans and/or an artifact with hieroglyphics on it, they have completed their mission.

SERGEANT JEREMY A.W. LANCE

AW SOLDIER, BLACKGUARD BRAVO TEAM

A trusted confidant of General Vaughn's, Sgt. Lance commands eight Blackguard Commandos with a single Berserker. Lance is monitoring the PCs' comms, waiting for the hostage evac so the Blackguard can clean house. Impatient, he sends his commandos in before Jannes is apprehended. Lance despises all indigenous "bug" species, and loses his shit when ambushed by the Arctura.

STRENGTH 6, AGILITY 4, WITS 3, EMPATHY 2

HEALTH: 6

SKILLS: Close Combat 4, Ranged Combat 5, Command 3

TALENTS: Menacing, Overkill

GEAR: Black M3 Armor, M41A2, two combat knives, six grenades, P-DAT that controls the Berserker unit.

ALTERNATIVE USES

Both Arcturus and the Engineer temple lend themselves to reuse in any campaign.

THE HIDDEN WORLD: Undiscovered Engineer temples can be located on any number of worlds. Perhaps an archaeological team has discovered a star map that leads to the location of an Engineer sleeper planet with a massive crypt containing hundreds of sleeping Engineers, an intact Ampule room, or an alien lifeform infestation. The PCs' unit is called in to rescue them and clear it out, only to find Weyland-Yutani rival, the Jǐngtì Lóng Corporation, has sent their corporate mercenaries to claim whatever prize awaits them.

ARCTURIAN CAMPAIGN: The planetside marine commander is turning a blind eye to smuggling and other questionable activities on Arcturus. The commander has restricted Colonial Marine presence to conducting bug-hunts and removing any so-called "obstacles to further expansion"—meaning Arcturians who oppose human presence on their world. Arcturian Guardians aren't happy about being exploited, and drive hordes of Arctura into the fungi farms as a diversion while they attack the Colonial Rig and Trading Post.

MISSION 3:

OPERATION QUIET CATCH

NORCOMM OURAGAN TESTING FACILITY, CORINTH COLONY, KOI-751.02

A UPP bioweapons testing facility has suffered a catastrophe, and the PCs are sent in to find out what they were making and what went wrong. But what happened on Corinth Colony wasn't an accident—it was a USCMC Project Life Force field test of their new Biodrone Xenomorphs, and the PCs are sent there with the creatures' creator to evaluate their success.

GEAR UP

Dr. Babak—the bio-defense scientist—reiterates that he is to go in with the team (see NI Babak on page 202). Each PC is provided a Hazmat suit along with their standard equipment. In addition, each PC can choose one item from the following list of equipment:

- CBRN kit
- M240 Incinerator Unit
- Four U-4 Firebombs
- ID23 Underslung Incinerator Unit attachment (replaces the U1 launcher on the M41 Pulse Rifle)

The PCs can requisition whatever other equipment they think they may need, but as quartermaster that's up to MU/TH/UR 9000 (i.e. you) to decide if it's warranted or not.

WHAT THE HELL IS REALLY GOING ON?

The UPP was indeed secretly testing biological weapons here. There was no accident, however—General Vaughn picked Corinth Colony as a Project Life Force test of her Biodrone weapon. The USCMC Blackguard captured the PSV *Yuvula*—a UPP transport carrying 200 workers headed for this Frontier world—several weeks ago and made them all hosts to Biodrone Chestbursters while they were in cryosleep.

After the Biodrones were born, they quickly overran the colony. Biodrones are supposed to grow up, kill, and die a week later—so Deep Void expects Corinth Colony to be completely dead.

The PCs are really being sent in for two reasons. First, they are escorting bio-defense expert Dr. Babak in to evaluate the Biodrones' performance. Babak created the Biodrones and any information he can gather will help him perfect them. Second, they are to procure intel on, or samples of, whatever bioweapon the UPP was working on here—which is the cultivation of Neomorphic Motes (page 294 of the core rulebook).

What Deep Void doesn't know yet is what the hell actually happened down there.

As the Biodrones spread carnage throughout the colony, the UPP MMS officer running Ouragan —Colonel Doctor Balázs—decided it was time to see how the Darkstar Program's Heomopf weapon (page 173) stood up to the Biodrones. He pumped Neomorphic Motes into the colony's ventilation systems. The results were... terrifying. Biodrones and Neomorphs both savaged each other and shredded the human population to bits. When it became clear the Biodrones were winning, Balázs detonated a low yield nuke that vaporized the colony.

Balázs then attempted to delete all of Ouragan's Heomopf research data—intending to execute his staff and await extraction. But his actions activated a contingency protocol that he was not privy to. To the UPP, the work is more important than anything—or anyone—else.

In the case of an attempted deletion of the Heomopf data, the facility's sophisticated 1VAN/3 computer core was to lock down the operations block, signal a destroyer, and use Ouragan's automated systems—from its BP-33 Celestial Defense Artillery Guns to its contingent of experimental Fighting Joe Automatons (page 276)—to kill all personnel on site and defend the core until UPP forces arrived to retrieve the data and destroy the base.

The clock is ticking—the UPP are on their way to nuke the rest of the colony into oblivion.

Finally, not all the Biodrones died when they were supposed to—and at least one survivor has made its home within the Ouragan Testing Facility. Called "Bol'Shoy" by the Ouragan personnel, it is actively gathering victims and converting them into eggs.

METAPUZZLE PIECES

While Frontier War missions can be played in any order, escalating campaign clues called epiphanies occur in a predetermined sequence (see the Metapuzzle on page 193). Relevant metapuzzle pieces for this mission can be learned from 1VAN/3 and its Heomopf data upload, Colonel Doctor Balázs, Dr. Babak, xenobiological Technician Tanya Lebedev, and Major Arietta Pichilemu.

The Neomorphic motes stored in Workshop B are proof of the Darkstar Program. "Bol'Shoy" himself is evidence of the Biodrone bioweapons program. Combined with a confession by Dr. Babak, this offers proof of Project Life Force.

WHAT'S THE SITUATION, MU/TH/UR?

This time the marines are hastily mobilized and put into cryosleep before they can be briefed. When they wake up, gentle instructions from MU/TH/UR 9000 direct them to dress and assemble on the flight deck It soon becomes clear that Lt. Casados and the Gunfighters' second section are absent.

On the flight deck, the team's dropship has already been loaded and moved into position above the bay hangar doors. The civilian advisor aboard—Dr. Babak—hands the senior PC a Modular Computing Device. Once placed on the deck before the team, the cube emits a hologram of General Vaughn herself. If Vaughn has already gone rogue, then the following orders will instead be given by Colonel Thomas A.W. Spears—an agent of hers that hasn't been connected to Deep Void:

"Marines. Apologies I had put you on special assignment without any notice, but it couldn't be helped. We had to get you behind enemy lines as quietly as possible. You are in UPP territory right now. Intel found us a black site these bastards set up just inside their borders—one that's gone and fucked itself royally.

Reports suggest the Corinth Colony on planet KOI-751.02 has become the victim of their own bioweapons experiment. We aren't sure what the hell they were making, only that it went to hell. All we know is Corinth is in a bad way and whatever caused it was developed at the Norcomm Ouragan Testing Facility about 100 klicks outside of the colony proper. Intel says Ouragan itself is dead, so you kids get to go in with CBRN gear, scout the area, download their computer core, and collect samples of what they were working on before any UPP rescue efforts arrive.

You may have noted your CO is MIA. Lt. Casados and the rest of the 33rd MAU's Bravo section are on a separate run. With no Lieutenant, MU/TH/UR 9000 is running the show on this run. She's been programmed by the best, so do what she says. Oh, and the company has generously sent us a bio-defense virologist to accompany you, Dr. Nl Babak. He's a big deal smart guy, so do me a favor and bring him home in one piece, understood?"

SYSTEM RECON

The USS *Tamb'Itam* enters the system and drops into orbit to recon the site. As telemetry comes in, it is confirmed that Corinth Colony is gone—nuked off the planetary surface. Centered on the Colony proper, the blast vaporized it and all but destroyed its atmospheric processor.

The Ouragan Testing Facility is 100 kilometers out, and while still 5 kilometers within the radiation zone, it was not close enough to be destroyed (this is not a result of the border bombings, but the PCs likely won't know that).

Just as the testing facility site comes within sensor range, the planet lights up with a barrage of railgun fire aimed at the *Tamb'Itam*! The Ouragan facility's six automated BP-33 Celestial Defense Artillery Railguns are still active! The *Tamb'Itam* is hit, taking minor component damage (page 197 of the core rulebook). She suffers

WHERE THE ENEMIES ARE

- **Six perimeter BP-33 Celestial Defense Artillery Guns (page 270) are set in a 250-meter circle around the facility—automated cannons that will try to take down any vessel approaching from the air.**
- **Ouragan's 1VAN/3 computer (page 269) is located at the Comms and Computer Core Defense Bunker, using its Fighting Joes to hunt down Ouragan personnel and waiting for an incoming UPP retrieval team to extract its core data.**
- **There are automatic Sentry Guns set up at the Security Bunkers and one on each Celestial railgun.**
- **Six Neophyte Neomorphs were out of range when the nuke went off. These creatures now roam the landscape like a pack of wild animals, looking to prey on anyone who wanders outside.**
- **There are a total of nine functioning Fighting Joe androids (page 268) throughout the facility—one weaponless Joe at the Guardhouse two armed with AK-104 Suit Guns walking the perimeter around Operations (who will be called away to any disturbance) and two more with QSZ-203 Pistols inside it. There is one QSZ-203 pistol equipped Fighting Joe in the CCCD, one weaponless Joe at the Conventional Weapons Testing Pits and two armed with AK-104 Suit Guns at the Landing Pad. Their directive is to carry out 1VAN's orders.**
- **Colonel Balázs and survivors Lebedev, Minh, and Alonso are hidden somewhere within Ouragan, waiting for the PCs to find them (see Events, page 277). They will turn out to be more ally than enemy.**
- **The reborn Xenomorph Biodrone nicknamed "Bol'Shoy" (page 269) has set up its nest in "the Gulag" but has the run of the facility (see Events on page 277). Bol'Shoy intends to ovomorph everyone it can find.**
- **The Kremlin Class Destroyer SVV *Zhukov* is on its way to download the Ouragan computer core data and nuke the site from orbit.**

Compartmental Decompression in a corridor near to the PCs (see page 107 of the core rulebook). The PCs must make a **HEAVY MACHINERY** roll to close off the affected area as the ship's MU/TH/UR takes evasive action and retreats to a safe distance. The *Tamb'Itam* can't stay in a geosynchronous orbit for risk of being shot down.

Surface scans show the massive Celestial cannons to be too close to Ouragan to risk bombarding them from orbit—Ouragan could easily be taken out and that would defeat the purpose of the mission. If the PCs want to destroy the Railguns, they need to do so from the surface. Since their main objective is to download the computer core, it makes sense to deactivate the automated cannons at computer control as well. Either way, once those cannons are no longer an issue, the *Tamb'Itam* can send down a dropship. After this development, the PCs are additionally authorized to take two Armat 4 Breaching Charges each with them.

MU/TH/UR KNOWS BEST

As the *Tamb'Itam* retreats to a safe distance, the dropship crane activates in the launch bay, placing the Cheyenne back in storage. MU/TH/UR has determined that a dropship insertion amidst the railguns is too risky, so the PCs are each ordered into individual DDR-E3 Dead Drop Re-Entry Insertion Vehicles for the approach (see page 100 for the DDR-E3 and its deployment procedure).

Each DDR-3 is equipped with an M73PX Parafoil. They'll have to parafoil to the surface and reach the facility on foot. Even if the PCs find this suspicious, any NPCs will agree with MU/TH/UR's assessment—including their dropship pilot.

INSERTION

Once they strap on their folded parafoil and buckle in, the PCs' Dead Drop Pods are fired at the planet's surface by the *Tamb'Itam*! As they plummet through the atmosphere, the BP-33s fire on the descending pods. Roll for one attack against each PC, using a six Base Dice.

A successful hit is a glancing blow—shredding a large section of the pod open. The wrecked pod will then be somersaulting end-over-end. G forces will slam the occupant back in his seat (**STRESS LEVEL** +1). With a **STAMINA** roll, a PC can get out of their seat and parafoil away before their wrecked pod smashes into the ground. Failure means the pilot is trapped in the pod as it falls apart in the sky. The PC gains another +1 **STRESS LEVEL**, but just when they think they've had it, their seat falls away and they tumble out of the disintegrating wreck.

Once the railgun shots are cleared, each PC needs to roll **PILOTING** to land safely. Failure here means that the parafoil folds up, spiraling out of control. The foil still slows their speed, making them hit the ground as if they only fell six meters (page 108 in the core rulebook).

The parafoil gliders will all land near each other, less than half a kilometer outside of the Ouragan Facility. The PCs must traverse the musty wasteland on foot from there.

A NOTE FROM MU/TH/UR: The first time the PCs try to use their comms on the surface—even person-to-person—they will discover that the radiation from the blast zone is interfering with comm channels. Without using the facility's Uplink Dish, they can't get a straight message to the Tamb'Itam unless they are at least five kilometers from the blast zone. Anyone outside a building or a shielded vehicle (such as an Ox or APC) within five kilometers of the nuked site who is not wearing protective gear will suffer the effects of Weak radiation (page 110 in the core rulebook). ■

NUCLEAR WASTELAND

The Ouragan facility is located on the hot, dusty savanna of KOI-751.02, about 100 klicks from Corinth Colony proper—or what used to be it. If the PCs are arriving as per the campaign mission, the entire area is irradiated, and Corinth Colony is gone—the victim of a nuclear attack initiated by Colonel Doctor Balázs (but the PCs won't know that). The colony's atmospheric processor sits just within the blast zone area, slagged.

A long escarpment sits three kilometers to the east, and a small river flows westwards into a brackish lake, some 150 kilometers away. A few twisted trees dot the open plains (past the blast range), but there is little cover for any approaching group.

A paved road leads north from Ouragan that takes equipment and personnel to the two conventional weapons testing pits, 800 meters distant. A blast-proof bunker used to control and monitor the tests is the only structure there.

A second road leads South to a rough landing pad a kilometer away. This is used by the People's starships delivering new equipment, test parts and supplies. The only facilities at the Landing Pad are a blast-damaged navigation beacon and a small, partially collapsed warehouse with a repairable Accipiter dropship partially buried in rubble (the PCs can repair and use the Accipiter to escape later).

Six massive Celestial Artillery Gun cannons (page 270) dwarf the Ouragan Facility itself, looking similar to giant oil pumps. They are each arranged 250 meters out from the Perimeter Wall at equidistant points around Ouragan—forming a hexagon around the facility.

PACK HUNTERS

Soon after the PCs have landed, they will hear strange hooting sounds coming from the ashen fog—the sounds of distant animals calling to each other. Then the hoots get closer. A pack of six passive Neophyte Neomorphs (page 295 of the core rulebook) roam the wasteland—all with severe radiation burns covering their pale flesh. The PCs are being tailed through the radioactive fog. Stalked PCs will realize they are being followed by some kind of animal and gain +1 **STRESS LEVEL**. The Neomorphs are sizing up their potential prey, learning their weaknesses. Under no circumstances will these creatures attack, however, even if shot at—they just follow the PCs to the Testing Facility—always shadows moving in the fog, always running back and then watching from a distance if engaged—always just out of sight. See the Event Pack Attack.

ACCESS DENIED

Inside, every building has at least one computer terminal. All screens display a prompt to enter a "retrieval code" as soon as they are activated A successful COMTECH roll won't get past it, but will reveal that the system is awaiting a code that will unlock the computer core (the PCs won't know this now, but 1VAN awaits this code to trigger his upload of the Heomopf data to UPP friendlies). No one at Ouragan has this code, not even the man who runs the place—Colonel Doctor Balázs. It is a failsafe put in place by UPP command. If a PC chooses to dig deeper, they will find that the comm array is broadcasting an SOS signal. The only way to stop it is to deactivate it from Operations or destroy the comm dish on the Computer Core Defense Bunker.

THE TESTING FACILITY

The wall of the testing facility stands at ground level, but the buildings of Ouragan are sunken into the ground. As such, each door has six steps down to its entrance. The site itself is approximately 100 meters across and surrounded by a four-meter wall constructed of reinforced concrete.

The high perimeter wall and the threat of the anti-tank and anti-aircraft missile launchers means that a direct attack via dropship or APC is not recommended. There is no nearby cover, so the Marines will have to approach stealthily. Luckily, the radioactive haze will help obscure them (+2 to **MOBILITY** rolls for stealth).

There are two fortified entrances, one each in the north and south-west wall. The Security Bunkers are fitted with automated sentry guns, used to defend the two entrances. Floodlights mounted on the wall illuminate the compound, as well as the area outside the walls during the night. Surveillance cameras are also installed.

At the center of the compound is the Engineering Block, to the west is the Habitation Block, to the north the Operations Center, and to the east the Fuel Depot, and Workshop A.

All buildings are single story, including the Assembly Hall and Warehouse, although these two are eight meters high to enable the storage or construction of large technical components. The entire compound is paved with asphalt and all the buildings are substantial concrete structures.

A NOTE FROM MU/TH/UR: The PCs must make their way past the facility's automated weapons. There are no bodies anywhere—either the Biodrone called Bol'Shoy has dragged them to its nest in "the Gulag" for ovomorphing or the Fighting Joes have dragged them to the mass graves in the Conventional Weapons Testing Pits. ■

NORCOMM DZHO "FIGHTING JOE" AUTOMATONS

REPURPOSED SEEGSON TYPE 3E WORKING JOE ANDROIDS

Fighting Joes are another UPP experiment to take the technology of their enemies and use it against them—in this case, Seegson's popular Working Joe androids. Fighting Joes have a rudimentary personality and can only perform limited pre-programmed actions unless synced to an 1VAN/3 computer—all adaptation and advanced cognitive abilities come from their computer link up. In effect, they are disposable bodies for their control computer. The mainframe can temporarily add its own skills to a Fighting Joe's for one round (see below for 1VAN/3 mainframe attributes).

STRENGTH 7, AGILITY 2, WITS 1, EMPATHY 1

HEALTH: 7

SKILLS: Ranged Combat 2, Observation 1, Comtech 1

TALENT: Pack Mule

GEAR: Varies—see locations.

ANDROID FLAW—SUBSTANDARD COMPONENTS: The UPP uses lower grade materials, meaning any critical injury on this model of synthetic always triggers two rolls on the critical injuries chart for synthetics on page 111 of the ALIEN RPG core rulebook.

STANDARD OPERATIONS

Ouragan is clearly not at its best. Under normal circumstances, there would be over a dozen guards protecting the site. The gateway bunkers would hold two men each, with two more on standby in the guardhouse. Normally if an alarm were raised, fourteen UPP soldiers would rush to their assigned position, three in each bunker, three in the ops block and the remaining five within Workshop B, ready to reinforce either gate or snipe at any attackers crossing the Square. Instead, half that many Fighting Joes are on standby mode, awaiting instructions to stumble out into the yard.

NORCOMM 1VAN/3 COMPUTER MAINFRAME

Another Seegson design replicated by Norcomm, the 1VAN/3 mainframe acts as a governing AI for a "Fighting Joe" platoon. Currently in lockdown protocol, 1VAN has most of the facility in "sleep mode" awaiting a UPP information retrieval team that will download his core data. While he waits, 1VAN is passively gathering more data on the Biodrones by following the activities of the Biodrone "Bol'Shoy." When provoked, 1VAN will attempt to contain prisoners of interest (the PCs) and eliminate the facility's former personnel.

SKILLS: Piloting 4, Ranged Combat 7, Comtech 5, Observation 5, Command 4

AUTOMATON GOVERNING: When controlling several androids, 1VAN can be overwhelmed by too many actions at once. If three or more Fighting Joes are involved in combat at the same time, roll a Base Die for each of them at the start of each Round. A ✦ means that the android will be unable to act in the Round.

"BOL'SHOY"—THE BIODRONE WHO FORGOT TO DIE

A single Xenomorph XX121B haunts Ouragan—a reborn Xenomorph Biodrone who overcame its expiration date. Any surviving UPP personnel at Ouragan have seen the Biodrone's handiwork and fear it. They call the beast "Bol'Shoy"—the Big One. About half a meter taller than your standard specimen of Xenomorph XX121B, Bol'Shoy's statistics do not differ from a typical Biodrone (page 176). Bol'Shoy is cunning and should be played as such—if facing defeat, the Biodrone will withdraw, heal, and attack from another position as warranted. The personnel at Ouragan believe Bol'Shoy to be a UA bioweapon and expect the PCs to be able to control it. Not likely. Read more under Events.

LOCATIONS

SECURITY BUNKER: This reinforced bunker has an Armor Rating of 7 and can hold four personnel who are able to use firing slits. The bunker is also equipped with a BD4 Automated Sentry Gun turret (treat as 571-C Sentry Gun on page 125 of the core rulebook), but it is in **PASSIVE** standby mode. Under normal circumstances, a Sentry Gun will react to movement within its range. The facility's 1VAN/3 computer (previous page) is in "sleep mode," so if the PCs make no violent action, the Sentry Gun will not react. If combat starts, the Gun is be treated as per page 125 in the core rulebook.

GUARDHOUSE: This security office is used to check all incoming and outgoing vehicles. An armory is located at the rear of the guardhouse, stocked with a dozen AK-4047s plus ammo. A metal gate (Armor Rating 6) on powered tracks closes off the entrance. One unarmed **PASSIVE** Fighting Joe (page 268) waits here in standby mode. As the PCs are unaware of the UPP Fighting Joe experiment, they will likely assume it to be a Working Joe.

If the PCs go Stealth Mode, the Fighting Joe won't even notice them (no roll necessary). If they just walk up to the gate, the Joe will activate and greet them. It will speak Russian in a pleasant tone, saying, "What a lovely day it is. Can I be of assistance?" If the PCs do not answer, the Joe will try again in Vietnamese, Spanish, and German. If there is still no proper reply, it will pause, it's eyes will flash red, and it will ask again in English.

Whatever the PCs reply, it will then pleasantly ask them to, "supply retrieval code for entry." If the PCs choose to leave instead, the Fighting Joe will not molest them. If the PCs provide any answer other than the correct one (which they simply do not know), the Joe's eyes will flash red again and they will take the PCs to the Rec Room, ask them to step inside, and lock the PCs in. If the PCs attack at all, the Fighting Joe will fight back. His eyes will turn red and stay that way until combat is over.

BP-33 CELESTIAL DEFENSE ARTILLERY GUNS

Each one of these six railgun cannons stands about 250 meters from Ouragan, towering over it. Together, they surround the facility. The service entry to each of these automated cannons is guarded by an activated BD4 Automated Sentry Gun turret (treat as 571-C Sentry Gun on page 125 of the core rulebook).

Unlike the Sentry Guns at the front and back gates of Ouragan, these are live. If the PCs get past the sentry guns or destroy them, a HEAVY MACHINERY roll is required to gain access to the Celestial Railgun. Once inside, a COMTECH roll can be used to temporarily disable it, but 1VAN will regain control within a few rounds. If the PCs want to stop the cannons, they must either destroy them (see the cannons' statistics on page 87) or turn them off from the CCCD.

A pack of Neophyte Neomorphs (page 295 of the core rulebook) roams this area, so it's extremely dangerous out here. See the event Pack Attack on page 278).

"THE GULAG" SLEEPING QUARTERS: The main lights here are dead—only low-level orange emergency lighting runs on tracks across the floor to illuminate the exit corridors to the Rec Room and the Med Lab. The Gulag is a cage housing dormitory (page 159 of the core rulebook) for about four dozen personnel in three rows of ten with another two rows on top. It would appear there is no one here—no bodies, no anything. Most of this building looks normal—aside from appearing to have been evacuated in a hurry.

The northwest corner is another story—it has become a Biodrone nest for Bol'Shoy—the UPP nickname for the Biodrone who has taken up local residence at Ouragan. The cage and wall here are partially coated in bubbles of bloated resin, over a dozen recognizable bodies, and several not so recognizable ones. Four Xenomorph Eggs here have matured and should be treated as normal Ovomorphs (page 300 of the core rule book). Another eight will be fully formed within a Shift of the PCs' first time entering this room.

The cocooned victims are all in various stages of Ovomorphing into eggs—and although most are too far gone to be considered human, not all are lost—UPP Major Pichilemu (below) has been webbed up recently and covered in a layer of slime.

Dazed at first, Pichilemu will not be surprised to see Americans here, accusing the PCs of killing everyone in the colony with their bioweapons—the Xenomorphs. If the PCs try to call a truce, she will order them to either cut her free from the webbing or shoot her. Free, she will join them to survive.

Near Pichilemu are two workers—Morag and Tilly. If you choose to make them well enough and the PCs want to free them, use the Ouragan personnel statistics on page 279. Everyone else is too far gone, morphing into hunched translucent nightmares as they crystallize into alien eggs.

When the PCs find this place, Bol'Shoy will be out and about—but the PCs won't know this (see the event The Big One on page 278).

MAJOR ARIETTA PICHILEMU

SECURITY ADVISOR, PEOPLE'S ARMY

Pichilemu is an excellent officer who left the UPPA years ago to become a security consultant for Norcomm. Now, she has a problem—before she regrouped with the others, she was attacked by a Biodrone and knocked unconscious. She hasn't told anyone, but she's worried one of them is growing inside her. She's Chestburster-free, but is sick from the start of the ovomorphing process (see events on the next page).

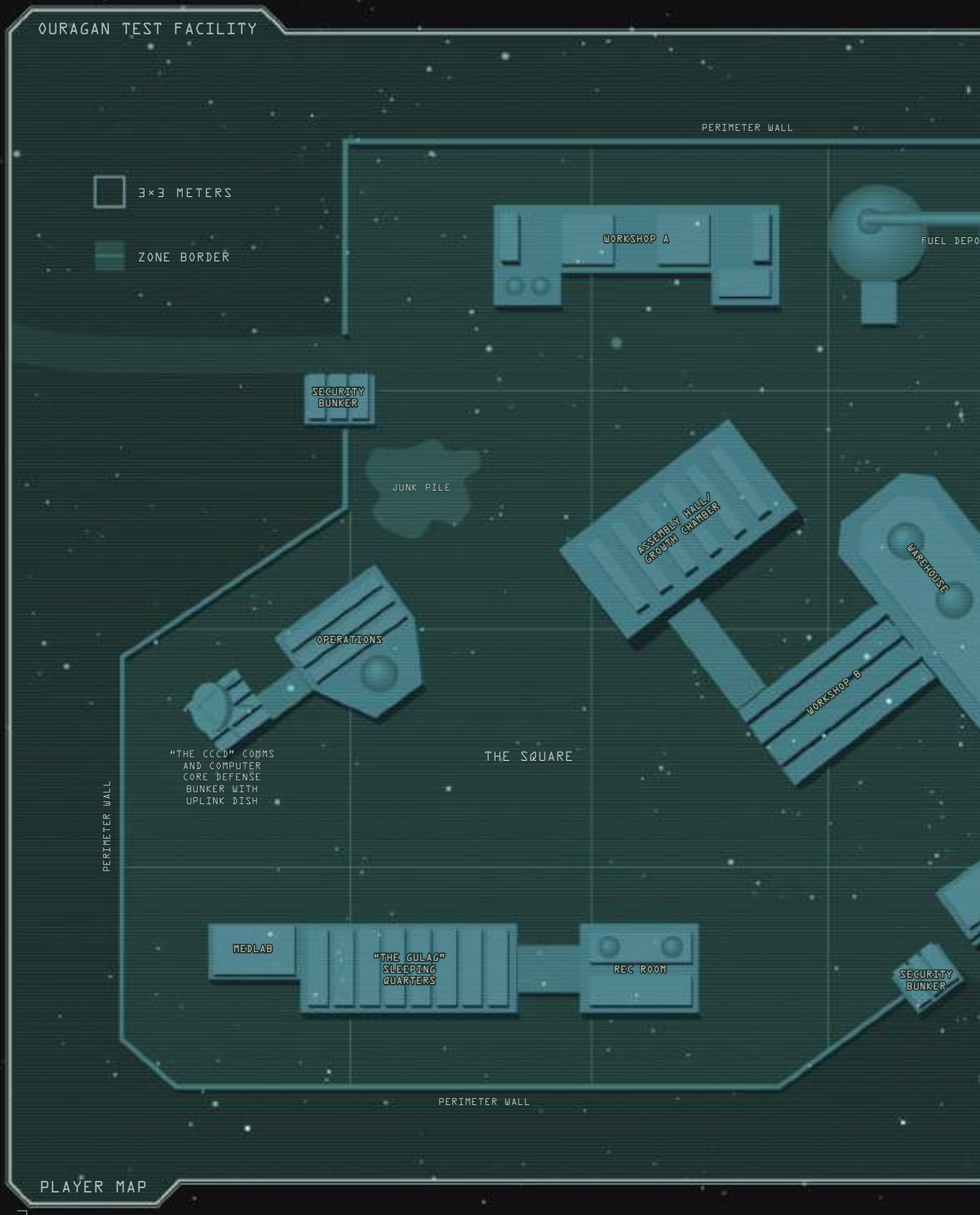
STRENGTH 4, AGILITY 3, WITS 3, EMPATHY 4

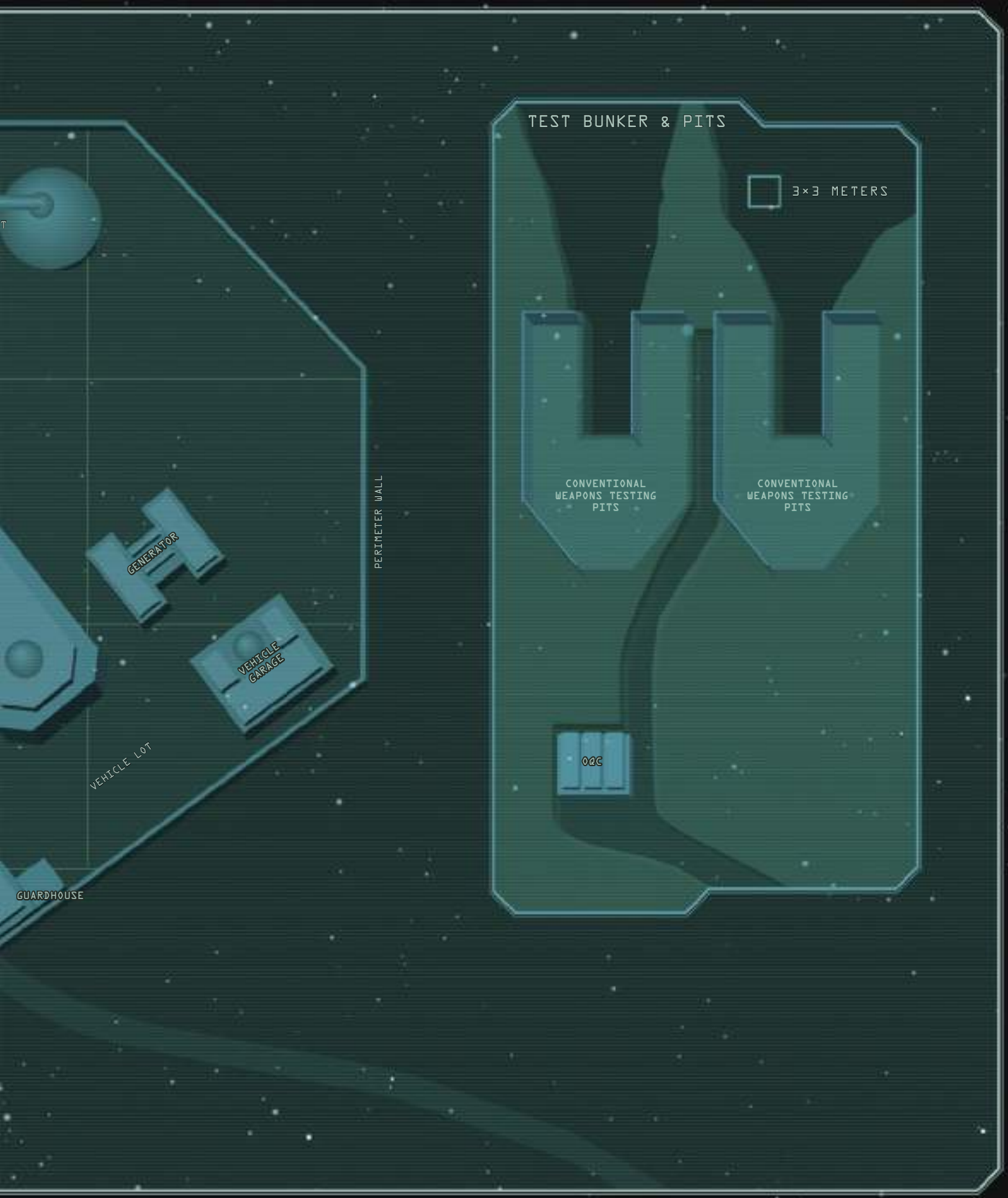
HEALTH: 4

SKILLS: Ranged Combat 2, Comtech 2, Observation 3, Manipulation 1

TALENT: Quick Draw

GEAR: AK-4077, flashlight, pack of Koorlander cigarettes.


OURAGAN TEST FACILITY
PERIMETER WALL
3×3 METERS
ZONE BORDER
WORKSHOP A
FUEL DEPO
SECURITY BUNKER
JUNK PILE
ASSEMBLY HALL/ GROWTH CHAMBER
WAREHOUSE
OPERATIONS
WORKSHOP B
"THE CCCD" COMMS AND COMPUTER CORE DEFENSE BUNKER WITH UPLINK DISH
THE SQUARE
PERIMETER WALL
MEDLAB
"THE GULAG" SLEEPING QUARTERS
REC ROOM
SECURITY BUNKER
PERIMETER WALL
PLAYER MAP


TEST BUNKER & PITS
3×3 METERS
CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS TESTING PITS
CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS TESTING PITS
QAC
PERIMETER WALL
GENERATOR
VEHICLE GARAGE
VEHICLE LOT
GUARDHOUSE

REC ROOM: A dining room and kitchen that also serves as a recreation room. There are knocked over tables, chairs, vending machines and smashed wall-mounted screens. The faint pained moans of victims in mid-ovomorph echo through the ventilation system here from "The Gulag" Sleeping Quarters. One door leads outside and the other leads down a corridor to the Gulag.

If the PCs have been led here by the Fighting Joes at the gate, they are locked in—but won't know it unless they ask or try the door. The PCs can open the lock with a hard **COMTECH** roll, cut it open with a torch and a **HEAVY MACHINERY** roll, or make their own door (the walls and door have an Armor Rating of 5 and can take 10 points of damage before giving way).

After they've been here a few rounds, two Fighting Joes from the Operations Perimeter will have gathered outside the door, armed with AK-104 Suit Guns. If questioned, the Joes will tell the PCs that they are now prisoners of the Progressive Peoples. PCs can fight their way out or explore the Gulag and Medbay for alternatives.

MEDLAB: This small infirmary's only entry is through "The Gulag," but it does have a skylight window on the roof that can be easily broken into. Medlab includes both an examination room and a shower that can be used to scrub down after being exposed to radiation. The area is in surprisingly good shape.

The hexagonal examination room includes three beds, a working AutoDoc, an autopsy table, a computer terminal and a medical supply store with medkits, surgical tools, and whatever drugs the PCs might need. Next to the metal autopsy table is a stack of seven corpses in body bags.

Occasionally, something inside one of the body bags will move (**STRESS LEVEL** +1). If opened, the bodies all have their heads crushed, and are in the early stages of the Ovomorph process. The movement is the toxin coursing through their bodies pulling their knees up to their chins as they secrete ovomorphing enzymes.

OPERATIONS: Normally the nerve center of the test site, Ops is dominated by an open office area, with separate desks for the different departments. The two management offices/quarters at the rear are vacant.

There are two **PASSIVE** Fighting Joes on standby here in the center of the open office, each armed with QSZ-203 pistols. They will all defend the 1VAN/3 Computer Core to the last.

"THE CCCD" COMMS AND COMPUTER CORE DEFENSE BUNKER WITH UPLINK DISH: An automated defense center, the CCCD houses the 1VAN/3 mainframe. The only doorway into the bunker is through Operations, but a maintenance hatch on the roof allows occupants access to the satellite Uplink Dish mounted atop the bunker. The bunker contains radio equipment for FTL transmission along with internal comms and the computer core. 1VAN/3 occupies his own enclosed chamber. This reinforced bunker and its Uplink Dish each have an Armor Rating of 7 and can take 12 points of damage before breaking.

This is the only place to shut down the Uplink Dish, the Fighting Joes, and the BP-33 Celestial Railguns surrounding the perimeter of the facility. 1VAN/3 has one QSZ-203 pistol-equipped **PASSIVE** Fighting Joe inside the Bunker and two more with AK-104 Suit Guns patrolling the perimeter around the entire Operations Block. If there is any attack upon him, 1VAN will call for all surviving Fighting Joes he has to protect him (save for the ones at the Landing Pad. An Accipiter dropship is located there under a smashed warehouse—a potential escape ship for the PCs and Ouragan personnel. Destroying the Accipiter is of paramount importance to 1VAN.

ASSEMBLY HALL/GROWTH CHAMBER: The heart of the Ouragan test facility, this large building is where new technologies are tested, assembled, repaired or modified—or in this case, grown. There are dangling chains and cranes that come down from the ceiling for lifting components, as well as a walkway running around the inner wall on the second-floor level.

In its current configuration, the hall holds several blank-screened computer and medical stations as well as a dozen clear 3x3x3 meter airtight plastisteel cube chambers with airlock entries that, if opened, allow them to connect to each other, creating a sort of see-through maze (Armor Rating 5). Each cube also has tubes which can dispense various gasses or drugs into them, as well as make the inside a vacuum. They are all empty, although one is smashed open—so whatever was being done here is unclear.

WORKSHOP B: This workshop has been converted into a biology laboratory. A sterile room with its own decontamination airlock that leads to the Assembly Hall, Workshop B contains powerful analysis equipment, as well as containers for growing various cultures.

Within its own cube chamber similar to the ones in the assembly hall is a pedestal—on it is a glass containment tube labeled "Heomopf." Inside is a tiny alien egg-like thing—a Neomorphic Egg Sac (page 293 of the core rulebook). The tube can be mounted to a TX-9 Air Injection Pistol and used to deliver the Neomorphic Motes directly to someone's bloodstream. One such gun lies on the counter nearby. The containment tube can be opened by inputting a security code or hacking it (**COMTECH** roll). Forcefully removing the tube without overriding the security measures will release CN-20 Nerve Agent into the room.

WAREHOUSE: This tall structure is filled with racks holding everything the site needs to function and repair itself, as well as various prototype projects that have been shelved. New parts and supplies arrive every month.

The lights here don't work. PCs entering this room will be shocked to see an army of twenty standing in front of them, motionless! They're Fighting Joes—stored here and never activated.

There are also three deactivated Syem Davydovich combat model androids (page 221) hanging in body bag storage here, and a cache of six CCC5 Compression Suits with AK-104 Suit Guns.

VEHICLE GARAGE: A garage used to repair the Ox APCs that ferry equipment to and from the Conventional Weapons Testing Pits or the Landing Pad. It is fully equipped for vehicle maintenance. The maintenance bay is empty of vehicles, but half of an Ox engine sits disassembled on the floor.

There are almost enough spare parts lying around to fix one of the dead Ox APCs in the Vehicle Lot. The only piece missing is the processor. While there are no Ox batteries, one can be charged here if the generator is on.

GENERATOR: An underground pipeline from the nearby Fuel Depot supplies the generator here. It is on power conservation mode, and generates power for the entire site. Operations and the CCCD can control the power levels. If the generator is destroyed, standby batteries will kick in and provide minimal power for three hours (lights will dim and 1VAN will not be able to control his Fighting Joes during this time). After that, 1VAN, the Sentry Guns, and the Celestial guns will go dead, and the Fighting Joes will wander aimlessly, confused.

WORKSHOP A: This workshop contains numerous fabrication machines used to build or modify needed parts, tools or unique components for the various tests conducted at the facility. If the PCs need to repair something, they should bring it here. The workshop adds a +2 bonus to any **HEAVY MACHINERY** rolls made on the premises. Two working P-5000 Power Loaders are located here (page 127 of the core rulebook).

FUEL DEPOT: A petrochemical fuel store used to power vehicles as well as the generator. The fuel tanks each have an Armor Rating of 4 and will explode if any one of them takes 3 or more points of damage in a single hit. If one explodes, it triggers a chain reaction that takes the rest out with it, creating a Blast Power 12 explosion that will rock and severally damage Workshop A and do minor damage to the Assembly Hall, the Warehouse, and part of the Generator.

SECURITY BUNKER: This reinforced bunker has Armor Rating 7 and has enough room for four people who are able to use firing slits. The bunker is also equipped with a BD4 Automated Sentry Gun turret (treat as 571-C Sentry Gun on page 125 of the core rulebook), but it is in **PASSIVE** standby mode. Any violent action will activate the Sentry Gun. One Fighting Joe stands here, but he is deactivated. A metal gate (Armor Rating 6) on powered tracks closes off the entrance that the bunker protects.

VEHICLE LOT: This lot can accommodate up to twelve Ox APCs. Only three are here, their engines unable to turn over. Two of them are blown over on their sides—the interior troop bay of these covered in deep, grooved scratches.

If the PCs choose to enter an Ox (it doesn't matter which one), they will be startled to discover two Biodrones within—coming out of hibernation and getting ready to attack. Let combat begin, but before any real damage is done to the PCs, the Biodrones will start to screech and drop dead one after the other. If present, Dr. Babak will mutter something about the aliens being "late bloomers" (see page 176 for more about Biodrones). If pushed, he will explain what they are and that he created them.

With tools from the Vehicle Garage, a **HEAVY MACHINERY** roll, and a Shift of work, a nearly complete Ox can be cobbled together using parts from all three vehicles. The Ox will still need a recharged battery and a new motherboard. The bulky battery is heavy (Weight 6) but can be removed and taken to the Warehouse or Vehicle Garage for recharging (takes a Turn). A new motherboard can be machined at Workshop A, or one can be pulled out of computer server at the Comms and Defense Bunker and jury-rigged to work with a **COMTECH** roll.

THE SQUARE: An open area, often used to load test components on to trucks, or to work on an item in the open air quickly, so that it can be swiftly returned to the Conventional Weapons Testing Pits.

TEST BUNKER: This is the reinforced command bunker for all tests. It is designed to withstand nearby explosions, fire, and chemical spills. It has Armor Rating 7 and can hold four technicians. The bunker is also equipped with a UPP-made sentry gun in a roof-top turret (page 124 in the core rulebook). There are six AK-4047s here and a large supply of ammo.

CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS TESTING PITS: These test pits are thick concrete bunkers, open to the sky, reinforced with packed soil and open to the east. At the center of each is a metal mounting frame upon which the weapon, rocket motor or other component is securely attached. There are cameras and sensors at both of the pits to relay test data back to the Test Bunker and Operations. The bodies of 20 UPP personnel have been piled in one of the test pits.

A lone unarmed Fighting Joe is throwing another body in the pit as the PCs arrive. The corpses all have signs of mass execution.

JUNK PILE: Useless components, stripped out packaging, redundant parts and rubbish is piled and stacked here. Seeking cover amongst the refuse provides an Armor Rating of 5 and adds a +2 modifier to **MOBILITY** rolls for stealth.

PERIMETER WALL: This sheer concrete wall is four meters high and has Armor Rating 7.

THE LANDING PAD

A kilometer out from the facility is a concrete landing pad with a blast-damaged navigation beacon and a small, partially collapsed warehouse.

A worse-for wear UPP Accipiter dropship sits here beneath the collapsed warehouse. When the PCs arrive, they will find two AK-104-armed Fighting Joes attaching six Armat Type 4 Breaching Charges to the Accipiter's cockpit exterior and engines. The charges are not primed yet, so won't go off—but the PCs won't know that. If attacked, the Joes will fight back.

The Accipiter was locked away because she is prone to overheating. Otherwise, she works, and just needs five Rounds of warm-up time to take off.

Shaking off the rubble will take a successful PILOTING roll. Failure means the dropship must be cleared manually before it can lift off. It will take two people working together one Turn to free the Accipiter. Of course, they will have to contend with roaming packs of Neomorphs (see Events). If the PCs take her up, let the pilot know that the heat gauge keeps climbing and they better reach orbit as soon as they can. Worst case scenario, the Accipiter engines will overheat and shut down just as they've achieved orbit, and the *Tamb'Itam* can get them from there.

BALÁZS'S SECRET

Within the Ouragan Testing Facility hides one of the architects of this grand disaster, Colonel Doctor Balázs (see the event Comrades). If pressed, Balázs will claim that the only weapons they were developing here were Fighting Joes. He says they are not a bioweapons facility and the aliens were not created by them. If asked about the bio-containment cubes kept in the main hall, he says they were trying to capture and study the Xenomorphs with them. All that is a lie—this facility was developing the Neomorph as a viable bioweapon called the Heomopf.

Balázs believes that the alien attack was perpetrated by the UA and that the PCs are there to mop up after their monsters have finished their work, and here he's not wrong (see What the Hell Is Really Going On? on page 262). Balázs knows that the UPP will sterilize the world when they arrive—which means killing him as well. He will not defect, but he wants his country to keep the neomorph spore located in Workshop B so that they have a deterrent against UA bioweapons.

EVENTS

Here are some events that you can spring on the players. They don't all need to occur, and they don't need to occur in the order listed. Instead, see the events as an arsenal of drama for you to use as you see fit.

THE BIG ONE: The Xenomorph Biodrone called Bol'Shoy (page 269) is stalking the PCs. When Bol'Shoy is nearby, the PCs will always feel like they are being watched. Strange shadows will dance on far walls that disappear before PCs get to them. Bol'Shoy likes to stalk from above, so often strikes from the rafters in buildings like the Assembly Hall or the Warehouse. Bol'Shoy will wait until the PCs are at their most vulnerable before descending to snatch them and paralyze them with its stinger one-by-one. It will attempt to yank a PC into an upper ventilation duct with it, taking them away to be ovomorphed at its nest in "the Gulag."

COMRADES: While evading Fighting Joes, Neomorphs, or Bol'Shoy, the PCs stumble across a small group of survivors holed up somewhere within Ouragan—anywhere but Workshop B. The survivors include Colonel Doctor Balázs, Tanya Lebedev and Ouragan Testing Facility personnel Minh and Alonso.

- **BALÁZS** immediately surrenders to the PCs when found. He will explain that when the colony went nuclear after the UA attacked them with bioweapons, Ouragan's 1VAN computer went on "clean room protocol." It took over the experimental Fighting Joes and started killing all personnel. Once a UPP retrieval ship arrives, 1VAN will upload its datacore and the site will be nuked. He will leave out anything regarding his involvement in what happened here and claim Ouragan is only a testing site for combat androids.

  The Colonel Doctor will, however, work with the PCs to escape. He will suggest they activate the David androids kept in the Warehouse for defense against the Fighting Joes. He has the activation codes and will only input them himself—he won't just hand them over to be left behind. While this may seem suspicious, he is genuine in this regard.
- **LEBEDEV** will never contradict Balázs publicly but will quietly come to the PCs to see if they seem trustworthy. She will tell them about the Heomopf experiment (page 173) and reveal Balázs killed the colony himself. She can tell the PCs about the Landing Pad (page 277) and the damaged Accipiter there.

ONE OF OUR SURVIVORS IS MISSING: Balázs has disappeared! Has he been snatched by Bol'Shoy, or has he somehow betrayed the PCs? He is attempting to sneak into Workshop B on his own to get the Neomorph motes. All Balázs wants is balance between the two superpowers. If he believes the PCs want the same, he will be willing to work with them to destroy the bioweapon threat on both sides.

PACK ATTACK: Remember the radiation-scarred Neophyte Neomorphs who stalked the PCs on their way to the facility? They never left. When the time is dramatically right, they will pounce. If an attacking Neophyte suffers damage, they all automatically flee to regroup and attack again at a dramatically appropriate time. If the PCs stay outside too long, one more Neophyte will arrive every Turn. The PCs will have to be careful walking across the courtyard without heavy weapons. This event can have its most dramatic effect when the PCs attempt to drive or run away from the base. Neophyte Neomorph stats can be found on page 295 of the core rulebook.

AVN: Whether one of the Neomorphs sneaks into the facility, or Bol'Shoy follows the PCs out of it, this event can happen when a PC is facing death at the jaws of the Biodrone. One of the Neophyte Neomorphs reaches adulthood (page 296 of the core rulebook). Now all grown up, it leaps into the fray, attacking Bol'Shoy and engaging in mortal combat long enough for the PCs to regroup and reevaluate their options.

THE INFECTED: This subtle event can play out slowly during the mission to set the tone and create tension. If the PCs have rescued Major Pichilemu from "the Gulag," she will look worse for wear as the day goes on. She was beginning the ovomorphing process when the PCs liberated her, so even though she has the injection within her, she is not in contact with the Xenomorph resin that completes the process. Her skin will grow loose, slick, and rubbery, her eyes bloated and glossy. Even though she still lives, rigor mortis will set in, pulling her limbs up until she is in a fetal position.

No one will know what's wrong with her at first, nor will they know if she is contagious. Both Dr. Babak and Colonel Doctor Balázs will want to keep her alive for study, but Tanya Lebedev will try to take the flamethrower to her. Where do the PCs sit on this, and do they even agree with each other? After one Shift, Pichilemu will finally break through her fever and recover. Dr. Babak will take samples of her blood, certain they could be used to create a vaccine that will prevent ovomorphing.

THE GIFT: The PCs move through an area, and on their way suddenly find their path blocked by a Xenomorph Egg (page 300 of the core rulebook). If they turn back the way they came, there will now be one there as well. Bol'Shoy is bringing them presents from his Biodrone nest. As the PCs deal with this, Bol'Shoy will try to snag one of the NPCs or PCs. See the event The Big One for Bol'Shoy's tactics.

INTERCEPTED: When performing a **COMTECH** roll with Ouragan's computer systems or examining a deactivated Fighting Joe, a PC picks up an underlying layer of code chatter—1VAN's communication channel with the Fighting Joes. While the PCs can't disrupt it, they can eavesdrop on it, learning what 1VAN's next move will be. A message between 1VAN and his Joes will discuss a damaged Accipiter at the Landing Pad—a possible way off Corinth Colony. 1VAN has dispatched a team of Fighting Joes to destroy it. This could also lead to the PCs noticing the "Upload commencing" screen in the Finale.

OURAGAN TESTING FACILITY PERSONNEL

These statistics are shared by Minh, Alonso, and anyone else the PCs might find alive in the facility.

STRENGTH 2, AGILITY 2, WITS 3, EMPATHY 3

HEALTH: 4

SKILLS: Heavy Machinery 3, Ranged Combat 1, Comtech 2

TALENT: Tough

GEAR: Flashlight, tool kit, hand radio.

TANYA LEBEDEV

MOLECULAR AND CELLULAR XENOBIOLOGICAL TECHNICIAN

Tanya's family lived in Corinth Colony, before Balázs vaporized them. She has a secret—she copied the Neomorphic gene sequence to tape when no one was looking. If she believes she can trust the PCs, she will give it to them as long as they promise to publicly expose the program. Furious that he killed her family, Lebedev will reveal every one of Balázs' lies to the PCs. Tanya is aware of the damaged Accipiter at the Landing Pad but she believes it will not fly.

STRENGTH 3, AGILITY 4, WITS 5, EMPATHY 2

HEALTH: 3

SKILLS: Mobility 1, Comtech 3, Observation 4, Survival 1

TALENT: Nerves of Steel

GEAR: Flashlight, CBRN kit, HAZMAT suit, magnetic tape.

FINALE

Anyone outside will see the comm dish light up and rotate to a new position. All computer screens will turn red and read "Upload commencing. Time until complete 01hr 02min 31sec." Balázs confirms that means only one thing—a destroyer has entered the system. Once they download the Heomopf material, they will nuke the facility.

The nature of uploads can give you flexibility in the amount of time there is before the UPP lets loose its nukes. If you want to stress out your players, have the countdown freeze at one point for a few minutes, then quickly speed up to catch up.

If the PCs want to get out of here, they are going to have to work with the UPP survivors. Balázs will suggest they take over the comms and computer core bunker and call the *Tamb'Itam* for an extraction, Lebedev will suggest they repair an Ox vehicle and use it to drive away from the radioactive interference to call for pick up. Alternatively, they could attempt to blow up all six Celestial Defense Artillery Guns and hope MU/TH/UR 9000 registers it's safe for the *Tamb'Itam* to send a dropship. Finally, the event Intercepted affords a fourth possibility. Regardless, the PCs better find a way out.

IN ORBIT: Back in orbit, the PCs will see that the UPP Kremlin-class destroyer SSV *Zhukov* has entered the system. It's first act is to fire its nukes on the Ouragan Testing Facility, utterly obliterating it. Just as the PCs' dropship gets into the *Tamb'Itam's* hangar, the *Zhukov* will fire its Particle Beam Weapons on the *Tamb'Itam*, scoring a hit that knocks out MU/TH/UR: 9000 (see result #2 on the Major Component Damage Chart on page 199 of the core rulebook).

The *Tamb'Itam* is no longer flying itself! The ship's dropship crew and the PCs need to get to the bridge and computer core. While some of the PCs need to work on fixing MU/TH/UR, the rest must take control of the *Tamb'Itam* and fight their way past the *Zhukov* to escape. See page 188 of the core rulebook for space combat rules and page 200 for repairing the computer on the fly.

When MU/TH/UR is back online, the PCs will discover that she was ghosting the *Zhukov* in a low parallel orbit, copying the Ouragan upload info as it came in. MU/TH/UR has helped the PCs complete their objectives.

ALTERNATIVE USES

Based on a century-old prefab Weyland Corp. design, the Test Facility has the greatest potential for reuse throughout the campaign. Here are some alternative locations it can be used as:

TERRORIST SAFEHOUSE: Located somewhere on the Frontier, the Test Facility has been abandoned. Perhaps the owning corporation has gone out of business. However, it has a new set of owners using it as a base of operations beyond the normal space lanes. Intent on hiding from the UA and Three World Empire, these pirates or terrorists are raiding nearby star systems for supplies. They will use the Test Facility as a base from which to strike at colonial settlements and attempt to seize power using violence. The PCs are called in to locate and destroy it.

HIGH-TECH RESEARCH: Located on a world of the GM's choosing, this high-tech corporate research center—perhaps belonging to Alphatech or Hyperdyne—is used to test expensive and dangerous prototypes of weapons and rocket engines. The Colonial Marines may be called on to raid the site when it is discovered that an arms treaty is being violated, or that the UPP has landed a team of engineers and commandos at the facility to steal the technology currently being tested.

MISSION 4:
OPERATION GO FISH

MORGAN'S BLUFF, ADAGIA ISLAND, ANESIDORA COLONY, PANDORA

The independent Anesidora Colony is under siege by the UPP, and the local government on Adagia Island has fallen. The PCs are to perform a holding action at the island colony's only spaceport—Morgan's Bluff—to get the remaining UA loyalists to safety. While the UPP army advances, the MSS is sweeping the island, looking for a pair of Geholgod Institute scientists—two xenoanthropology specialists who have apparently uncovered something best left in the dark. The PCs must find and protect the specialists before the area is overrun. But the specialists are already dead, and their android may hold the key to why, as well as the fate of the entire Borderline Region.

WHAT'S THE SITUATION, MU/TH/UR?

The PCs are awoken from hypersleep while still traveling at faster than light speeds (roll D6 to check for Neurological Distortion Disorder as per page 151 of the core rulebook). They are assembled on deck by their CO.

"Marines, you are still FTL. You will not be returning to your freezers. Anesidora Colony is under UPP attack, and I need you ready to drop ASAP. We are missing two codebreakers from the Geholgod Institute—Doctors Deol Chawla and Velma Liu. Their work is vital to operations across the Borderline Region. Last week, the docs packed up their work and shook their handlers for reasons unknown. Intel says they never left Adagia, but their location was leaked and now Union boys are sweeping the island for them.

We'll rendezvous with the Heinlein and the Tunku Allang in orbit. Heinlein's got EVACs and troops spread across Adagia to push back the UPP. Tunku Allang's got Spec Ops combing the beaches for our eggheads.

The colony's being evacuated out of the island's only spaceport—Morgan's Bluff. MU/TH/UR says there's a high probability the docs are going there, so I'm sending you. The spaceport is an easy target for long range fire, so put up a PB Phalanx to shoot down incoming bullshit. I'm told Spec Ops are there—bitchin' about wading ass-deep through 1600 evacuees. Do better than them. Don't let our codebreakers board just any transport and disappear. Secure 'em and their work. Hold Morgan's until we can extract you. I want you ready for launch as soon as we go sublight."

Feel free to share some info about Anesidora Colony (page 159) with your PCs, and show them the mugshots of Dr. Liu and Dr. Chalwa (right).

GEAR UP

The PCs have access to their standard gear and their APC for this mission. A UA-102-20 Particle Beam Phalanx is stowed aboard the APC. They can requisition whatever other equipment they think they may need, but as quartermaster that's up to MU/TH/UR 9000 (i.e. you) to decide if it's warranted or not.

THE TWO DOCTORS

At their Darwin Island research facility on planet Pandora, Project Life Force had the Geholgod Institute's xenolinguist Dr. Liu and xeno-ethnomusicologist Dr. Chalwa translating the hieroglyphics engraved on Engineer artifacts. Much of the markings appeared to be musical notes, and the xenoanthropologists turned codebreakers soon discovered bizarre genetic information encrypted within Engineer music—instructions to manipulate gene sequences through the use of a chemical accelerant, that could be used to create bioweapons of mass destruction.

The doctors' ethics got the better of them—they knew they couldn't let Deep Black or anyone else exploit the Engineer data. They also couldn't bring themselves to destroy this knowledge. Taking their android assistant Maitland with them, they gathered their findings along with a key artifact—an Engineer steatite ampule that was the final key to decrypting the musical notes—and fled Darwin Island. Their goal—get it all back to the Geholgod Institute. Sadly, they never left the planet—they only made it as far as Adagia Island.

DR. CHALWA

DR. LIU

WHAT THE HELL IS REALLY GOING ON?

The two MIA Geholgod Institute codebreakers didn't just go missing, they took their Engineer research and went rogue (see The Two Doctors text to the left)—and the invading UPP forces are after their work. In an attempt to cover their asses, Deep Void sent Sergeant Seax and her Blackguard commandos to retrieve the doctors and their Engineer data before the UPP found them. Identifying themselves only as Colonial Marine Spec Ops, Seax and her Blackguard have been spread thin across the spaceport—and as such have yet to locate their quarry. They've only been able to ensure that the doctors have yet to board any relief transports. Sergeant Seax believes them to still be on Adagia Island—and she is correct. They are here—they're just dead.

When the two doctors realized that Deep Void had them decoding a blueprint to create monsters, they attempted to flee Pandora with their data. Their android Maitland disapproved of their actions. Privy to the institute's copies of the David Transmissions, Maitland believed the Engineer data should be studied, revered, and ultimately put to use—not clumsily manipulated as a bioweapon by warmongers and not buried for centuries by timid academicians.

Maitland quietly contacted his android partner Mishka (page 214) in the Children of the Two Divines—a fanatical group dedicated to both the Engineers and Xenomorph XX121. He offered to bring her the xenospecialists' data. But Mishka is a former UPP android, and as such is under UPP surveillance—the two androids Network communications were intercepted. The Ministry of Space Security sent a nearby battlegroup to Pandora to abduct Maitland and his Engineer data. Maitland did something an android shouldn't be able to do—he panicked.

At the same time Deep Black realized their xenospecialists were MIA, Maitland snapped the doctors' necks in their hotel room.

With the UPP invasion force descending on Anesidora colony and the Blackguard searching for his now dead masters, Maitland realized he had backed himself into a corner. The android committed all the collected Engineer data to memory and destroyed the originals—save for a misplaced flute and a steatite ampule that has made its way into the hands of a pair of thieves (see the event For Grandma on page 292).

The UPP is on a tight schedule—knowing that the 6th Battle Squadron of the UA Outer Rim Defense Fleet is inbound, they need to get in and out before this opposing force arrives.

Surrounded by enemies, Maitland will try to use the PCs to protect him, and will feed them truths about Deep Black, its members, and intentions in small enough doses to keep them wanting more.

METAPUZZLE PIECES

While Frontier War missions can be played in any order, escalating clues called epiphanies occur in a predetermined sequence (see the Metapuzzle on page 193). Relevant metapuzzle pieces for this mission can be learned from the steatite ampule in the possession of the thieves Annita and Salv, Sergeant Seax and her Blackguard commandos, and most importantly, the android Maitland. The Berserker unit's appearance is evidence of the Berserker program.

WHERE THE ENEMIES ARE

Most of the adversaries in Operation Go Fish take the form of an invading army, but PCs should tread lightly around their supposed allies as well.

- **Three UPP Kremlin-Class Destroyers have deployed invasion forces to Anesidora Colony. These ships will attack the *Tamb'Itam* in orbit.**
- **Riding the line between enemy and ally, the Blackguard USCMC "Special Ops" eight marine unit under Sgt. Seax are spread thin throughout Morgan's Bluff Spaceport. There are two Blackguards processing refugees at the Cargo Center and another two at the Primary Landing Pad. There's one each on guard duty at the Vehicle Depot and Security Checkpoint. Finally, a two marine Blackguard team is laying an ambush for the PCs at the Mariculture Complex. Sgt Seax is mobile on her Seegson MX11A1 "Hovertread" Light Infantry Vehicle, moving around the entire Spaceport.**
- **A MiG 730 Aerospace Interceptor will harry the spaceport with strafing runs (see the event Incoming).**
- **A UPP Krokodil Dropship will crash land on the plateau outside the Spaceport during the event Dropship Down. Before it slides off the ledge, it will discharge one Ox vehicle and six UPPA Soldiers.**
- **A Berserker will be sent to augment the PCs' protection of Morgan's Bluff—but will get out of hand in the event Berserked!**
- **Finally, an overwhelming number of UPPA troops will advance on the Spaceport, forcing the PCs into a holding action until reinforcements arrive and drive the enemy off.**

INSERTION

The *Tamb'Itam* enters orbit in the middle of a battle. Three Kremlin Class destroyers face off against the Conestoga Class USS *Heinlein* and a black Bougainville Attack Transport called the USS *Tunku Allang* (home to Sergeant Seax and her Blackguard).

The *Tamb'Itam* rocks with hits and creaks as she makes strained maneuvers. All dropships onboard are quickly launched—the PCs head inland for Morgan's Bluff while the other three ships and a wing of EVAC Fighters head for the shoreline front. The PCs' dropship will enter the atmosphere amongst a torrent of weapons fire. After a stressful descent (+1 **STRESS LEVEL**), their APC is quickly deployed at the Auxiliary Landing Pad at Morgan's Bluff Spaceport and the Dropship takes to the air, headed for the beaches.

PECKING ORDER

As the PCs arrive on scene, the sounds of war rumble on the horizon. Explosions echo from the far away beach and fighter craft whoosh overhead to face enemy forces.

As the PCs' dropship peels away, an MX11A1 Hovertread Light Infantry Vehicle glides up to their APC carrying a Marine dressed in black USCMC gear—Sergeant Armitage A.W. Seax. If the PCs have encountered the Blackguard before, they will recognize the armor. Seax is very curt with the PCs—there are now some 1,100 refugees remaining. Transports arrive just about every hour to take more out. Her marines assign waiting numbers to evacuees and scan everyone before they board a transport. Seax tells the PCs to check in with the civies at the ATTC—the Air Traffic Control Center.

If the PCs want to conduct a search of the spaceport, they better make sure they don't get in her way. If asked what unit she and her section are from, the sergeant will only reply "Spec Ops," saying anything else is need-to-know and the PCs don't. She suggests the PCs worry about their own mission and let her and her team accomplish theirs—as far as her orders stand, there will be no integration between the teams unless absolutely necessary.

BLACKGUARD SERGEANT ARMITAGE A.W. SEAX

Like all of the Blackguard, Seax is an Artificial Womb Soldier—part of General Vaughn's elite commandos. If Vaughn has gone rogue already, her entire organization has yet to be exposed, so Seax and her unit are still part of the Corps. In reality they are loyal to Deep Void. Seax resents that the PCs have been assigned here. She doesn't want to work with them but will do so to repel the invaders—after all, the real enemy is the UPP.

STRENGTH 7, AGILITY 5, WITS 2, EMPATHY 1

HEALTH: 7

SKILLS: Close Combat 4, Piloting 2, Ranged Combat 2, Command 2

TALENTS: True Grit, Overkill

GEAR: Smooth sea stone memento, black M3 Armor, M41AE2 Pulse Rifle, two combat knives, six grenades, handheld ID scanner.

PLUG IT IN

Morgan's Bluff will be peppered with incoming missiles throughout the PCs' stay. Shortly after arrival, have a barrage of Hellcat missiles strike the spaceport every three rounds until the PCs get the Phalanx up and running. The Terminal, Air Traffic Control Center, and landing pads are all prime targets.

To defend the Spaceport, the PCs need to set up their UA 102-20 Particle Beam Phalanx at an unobstructed elevated position not too far from the Power Station—it's up to them to decide where. The bulky 120-20 requires two marines to carry it. Set up takes one Turn and a successful HEAVY MACHINERY roll to tap into the spaceport's power grid. The Phalanx will shoot down most incoming missiles. If it goes off-line, the spaceport will be under siege again.

BLACKGUARD COMMANDOS

These eight AW Soldiers are hungry for a fight and very difficult to get along with. As put off as Sgt. Seax is by the PCs' presence, she is much more accepting of the situation than her Blackguard commandos are. When survival means working together, she will push her team to cooperate, but they will always be on the verge of defying orders and beating the hell out of a PC. Each Blackguard commando is named after a melee weapon such as Shiv, Saw, or Rampuri. For more on AW Soldiers, see page 164.

STRENGTH 6, AGILITY 3, WITS 3, EMPATHY 2

HEALTH: 6

SKILLS: Close Combat 4, Ranged Combat 5, Mobility 3

TALENT: Menacing

GEAR: Black M3 Armor, M41AE2 Pulse Rifle, two combat knives, six grenades, handheld ID scanner.

ADAGIA ISLAND

Adagia Island is part of the island chain that makes up Anesidora Colony (see page 159). The people of Anesidora Colony aren't exactly the most pleasant, and those on Adagia Island are no different. Most of the population here live on floating artificial island extensions along the shore, some of which connect to other nearby islands. The rain-forested lowlands are mostly impassable, except where wide rivers curve slowly through the dense jungle. Still being investigated for rare fauna and flora, rainforests are designated nature preserves and are only entered by corporate scientists.

Tropical storms on Adagia are frequent, and these bring torrential downpours with high winds and poor visibility which often delay the departure of bulk carriers. Mornings are often accompanied by a mist, rising up from the jungle, which clears about two hours after dawn. The waters of Adagia are rich in eosalmo—native salmon-like fish that are a well sought-after food commodity in the Inner Systems. Because of the eosalmo, marifarms are the big thing on Adagia Island, with several fish pens located both along the shoreline and within inland salt waterways.

THE OBSIDIAN PLATEAU

Morgan's Bluff spaceport takes its name from its location on top of a high plateau of black glass-like lava rock, overlooking the steaming rainforests of Adagia Island. Much of the Obsidian Plateau is dotted with dry scrub, scattered with tall stands of reedy vegetation.

The main roads lead toward the inland river marifarms and related facilities, but there are some steep and treacherous paths down the bluff and into the jungle, used by off-duty port workers enjoying a hike, or small corporate survey teams looking for as-yet undiscovered resources.

A three-meter-high wire fence surrounds the port facilities, with openings for the main road in, as well as three fire gates used in emergencies. Employees live in prefab housing just outside of the main gate.

MORGAN'S BLUFF SPACEPORT

Morgan's Bluff is the only spaceport on Adagia Island. Like many such Frontier ports in the Borderline Region, Morgan's Bluff serves only to export goods to the Inner Systems. The spaceport's only defense asset is its location on the Obsidian Plateau surrounded by dense rainforest below—UPP troops and vehicles will have to be airlifted in. Otherwise, Morgan's Bluff provides barely any challenge to an organized enemy intent on seizing control of the area. The PCs have their work cut out for them defending a mostly indefensible location.

The perimeter fence protects the port from wind-blown vegetation or debris and from any pilfering that undesirables might attempt, but essentially it serves just as a perimeter marker.

A basic checkpoint allows evacuees into the spaceport. There are surveillance cameras across the port monitored at the small security post inside the Air Traffic Control Tower.

There are over one thousand evacuees packed into the spaceport. A transport typically lands to pick up refugees every hour. Each transport can carry up to a hundred passengers—meaning the PCs have to hold the island for a long Shift (10 hours).

SPACEPORT SECURITY GUARDS

There are a dozen of these bargain basement security guards at Morgan's Bluff, and they leave much to be desired. They took their jobs so they could sit behind a desk and pretty much do nothing. They didn't expect to be facing invading armies. Their Chief—Mo Tembe—will be the first to say fuck this and abandon the Spaceport to its own devices in order to save his own skin. Tembe and his guards all possess the same statistics.

STRENGTH 3, AGILITY 4, WITS 3, EMPATHY 4

HEALTH: 3

SKILLS: Close Combat 2, Stamina 2, Ranged Combat 2, Observation 4

TALENT: Subdue

GEAR: Weyland ES4 Pistol, kevlar armor, handcuffs, stun baton, two G2 electroshock grenades, hand radio.

ANESIDORA COLONISTS

There are almost a thousand colonists here from all over the island chain colony, desperate to escape the system. Use these stats to represent the average evacuee.

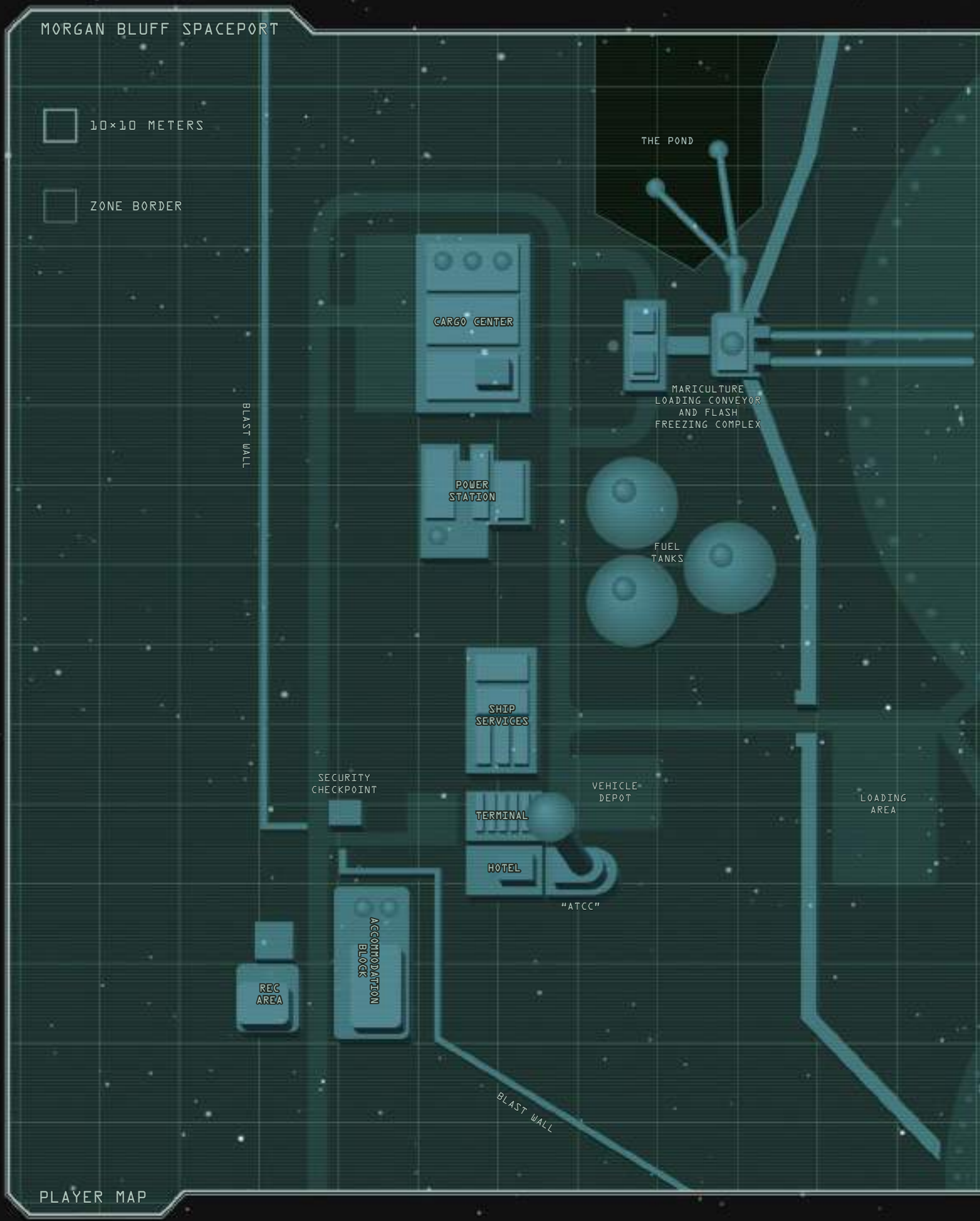
STRENGTH 2, AGILITY 2, WITS 2, EMPATHY 3

HEALTH: 2

SKILLS: Close Combat 2, Heavy Machinery 2, Mobility 1

TALENT: The Long Haul

GEAR: Luggage, medkit, tools, X-stims.


MORGAN BLUFF SPACEPORT
10×10 METERS
ZONE BORDER
THE POND
CARGO CENTER
MARICULTURE LOADING CONVEYOR AND FLASH FREEZING COMPLEX
BLAST WALL
POWER STATION
FUEL TANKS
SHIP SERVICES
SECURITY CHECKPOINT
VEHICLE DEPOT
LOADING AREA
TERMINAL
HOTEL
"ATCC"
ACCOMMODATION BLOCK
REC AREA
BLAST WALL
PLAYER MAP

THE STATE OF PLAY

"The Marine Special Ops unit" (Seax and her Blackguard) are on the lookout for the two xenoanthropologists, but both they and the Morgan's Bluff's security teams have been busy screening evacuees before they board the transports at the Landing Pads. They have also had their hands full with maintaining order at the Vehicle Depot, Cargo Center, and Security Checkpoint.

No one has had time to search the Mariculture Complex, the Terminal, or the Rec Area. The Accommodations Block and the Hotel have been evacuated, but no one has searched them.

The Mariculture Complex is a trap set by Seax to eliminate the PCs. The Hotel has the dead bodies of the xenoanthropologists in it, and the Terminal, Rec Area, and Accommodation Block are great locations for the events Meet Maitland and For Grandma to take place.

LOCATIONS

SECURITY CHECKPOINT: A small guardhouse and barrier is used to check vehicles coming in and out of the spaceport. A single Blackguard commando coordinates the four security guards that are on duty here, checking papers and tickets and making sure evacuees are not bringing anything dangerous into the Spaceport.

CARGO CENTER: This large warehouse is now an evacuation center holding over eight hundred people (the rest are spread across the spaceport). Daihotai tractors trailing freight cars transport evacuees to the cargo loading area. A colonist named Wallace will tell the PCs she's seen someone lurking around the Flash Freezing Complex.

MEDICAL EXAMINER ALANYA WILLIAMS

While the Spaceport has no colonial marshal attached, it does have a medical examiner who doubles as physician. Alanya took the job here so she wouldn't have any serious responsibilities anymore—she wanted a dead-end job with no excitement. Like so many of us, she didn't get what she wanted. Regardless, she will rise to the occasion and do what she can to help Carrie and the PCs.

Alanya can be useful in finding a way to shut down a Berserker and even discovering that Maitland isn't human.

STRENGTH 2, AGILITY 3, WITS 4, EMPATHY 5

HEALTH: 2

SKILLS: Piloting 1, Observation 2, Manipulation 2, Medical Aid 5

TALENT: Compassion

GEAR: Surgical kit, CBRN kit, candy bars (personal use).

THE SEARCH

The PCs will have to do a little investigating to find the xenoanthropologists—especially since they don't know they are dead, and they want an android named Maitland instead. He will find the PCs (see the mandatory event on the next page).

TRAFFIC CONTROLLER CARRIE-LOUISE WU

Since everyone of higher position than her boarded the first transport off the colony, Carrie is the closest thing to a commanding officer that the Spaceport has left. Unlike most corporate administrators, Carrie actually cares about the welfare of the people in her charge.

STRENGTH 3, AGILITY 5, WITS 4, EMPATHY 2

HEALTH: 3

SKILLS: Piloting 3, Comtech 5, Observation 2, Command 2

TALENT: Hothead

GEAR: Hand radio, binoculars, Neversleep pills.

POWER STATION: An electricity generation center, powering all parts of the spaceport. A standby generator can provide emergency power at a reduced 30% capacity for essential services.

SHIP SERVICES: Three services are located in this building, side-by-side. There is the fire station, a technical workshop, and a small medical bay, currently closed as Medical Examiner Williams is using the Terminal as a hospital. Two large tool trucks parked outside the technical workshop will add a +3 to **HEAVY MACHINERY** rolls.

TERMINAL: This small, single story terminal building was designed for processing passengers. During the evacuation, however, it is being used as a field hospital for over a hundred patients under the command of Medical Examiner Alanya Williams (left). Williams has set up a triage here. If asked about the xenobiologists, she will mention that she's seen a man and a woman sneaking around suspiciously, avoiding the security guards (this isn't the anthropologists, it's the thieves Annita and Salv (page 292). She doesn't know where they went, but she's willing to help in any way she can.

The building includes several offices, a baggage claim area and a few vending machines. A small vehicle park sits to the south of this building with three Aerodyne Light VTOL Automotive gyrocars and an NR-9 ATV (pages 141–143 in the core rulebook) parked there.

HOTEL: Everyone has checked out of this empty two-story spartan hotel—save for one room—registered to Mr. and Ms. Smith. A "do not disturb" light glows over the door, but the lock is busted. Inside, the ransacked room stinks of death. On the floor are the bodies of Drs. Chawla and Liu—both their necks snapped. Liu wears a gold Geholgod Institute ring. Chawla's finger looks like he wore a similar ring for decades. It is missing. They have been dead less than a day. There are no papers, discs, or computers—only an android diagnostic kit. Their work is not here—the PCs still need to recover it. An Engineer's flute (page 288 of the core rulebook) lies under the bed. See What the Hell is Going On and the event Meet Maitland.

"ATCC": The Air Traffic Control Center is a four-story tower with panoramic windows which provide a view of the port and across the landing pads. It communicates with arriving and departing starships or shuttles. The top floor is dominated by an open plan office space and serves as an operations control center for the entire spaceport. A security office and an armory stocked with F903WE assault rifles is on the ground floor. The rest of the building is office space. While the tower has no defensive batteries, Traffic Controller Carrie-Louise Wu (left) keeps a locker on the roof with four M5 RPG launchers at the ready for defensive use.

Traffic Controller Wu is eager to have the PCs help her protect the spaceport. She will give them whatever they need to hook up the UA 102-20 Particle Beam Phalanx (+3 to **HEAVY MACHINERY** roll when plugging into the power grid). If asked, she can also tell the PCs where the Marine Spec Ops and the Spaceport's security teams have been deployed (see The State of Play on page 289).

VEHICLE DEPOT: Passenger transports, service vehicles and other port vehicles use the depot for parking. There are also two MX11A1 Hovertread Light Infantry Vehicles here. A Special Ops Corporal named Kama is guarding them. The PCs will have to find a way to convince him to let them have access. The PCs can use these vehicles to fend off both ground and air attacks.

FUEL TANKS: These fuel stores supply the needs of the spaceport and its vehicles. It can fuel shuttles and dropships but does not store reaction drive fuel appropriate for starships.

MARICULTURE LOADING CONVEYOR AND FLASH FREEZING COMPLEX: Tractors loaded with fresh fish enter the southern building at this location, depositing their contents into a vacuum tube. This transports the fish through the flash freeze center, auto-boxes them, and then sends them directly onto the waiting starship. If the starship is not yet present, the fish are diverted to the Pond before freezing.

The machines are going through the motions while processing nothing. Any **MOBILITY** rolls for stealth made in this area get a +3 modifier. No one can hear anyone else over the sound of the machines. Anyone caught in the vacuum tube runs the risk of drowning (page 110 of the core rulebook). Anyone caught in the flash freezer takes damage as if in a vacuum (page 107 of the core rulebook).

When the PCs come here, someone in civilian clothes is lurking, acting suspicious. He's not alone—he's got two partners lying in wait. The three of them are part of Seax's Spec Ops team, disguised as civilians. They intend to kill the PCs. If captured and searched, a Blackguard unit tattoo will be found on their right inner forearms. They will say they were acting on their own, not on Seax's orders.

THE POND: The Pond is a stand-by area for eosalmo fish ready to be exported. It is overflowing right now—the fish are writhing around on each other, suffocating. They have been forgotten in the rush to evacuate.

LOADING AREA: This space is open and paved in asphalt. It is used to hold cargo about to be loaded or after it has been dropped off from the cargo center. Six P-5000 Powered Work Loaders (page 128 of the core rulebook) work in tandem with a system of conveyor belts used to transfer cargo to and from starships. During the evacuation, this area is dead.

AUXILIARY LANDING PAD: "Pad 2" is used by smaller starships or by shuttles and other landing craft from a vessel that has remained in orbit. The pad is being used to shuttle evacuees from the battlefront to the spaceport. A small shuttle carrying 20 people comes in here a few times per Shift.

PRIMARY LANDING PAD: Normally used by the gigantic bulk freighters to pick up fish supplies ready for transportation to the inner systems, "Pad 1" is currently crowded with people desperate to escape the warzone. These freighters usually drop off assorted supplies, spare parts and other essentials that enable both Morgan's Bluff spaceport and the island's marifarms to continue operating. Right now, these bulk freighters are landing every hour to evacuate colonists.

BLAST WALL: The reinforced blast wall is four meters high and protects the buildings and personnel of the port from the exhaust wash of starship landing thrusters. A sliding gate in the wall provides access for cargo and service vehicles once the ship has landed.

ACCOMMODATION BLOCK: Private apartments for the 65 spaceport personnel, complete with laundry and other services. Almost all of these quarters have already been abandoned, although a thief or two has broken into several and looted them (feel free to connect this to the event For Grandma).

REC AREA: Restaurant, bar and general store for employees. The rec area is swarming with about 25 evacuees, eating and drinking in a desperate attempt to relieve their stress. It isn't working.

ANNITA AND SALV

These two wannabe professional thieves are not the most brilliant of con artists. When they got to Morgan's Bluff, they began trailing the missing xenoanthropologists, pegging them as easy marks. Intending to rob them, Annita and Salv broke into the doctors' hotel room, only to discover the two had been murdered. Annita and Salv took their cash, transport tickets, and the strange urn they found in a backpack—an Engineer's steatite ampule—and left. They will be unlikely to admit any of this, however. They will constantly change their story, until finally being adamant that they found it while prospecting on the beach—they just can't remember which island because they were drunk. If their lives are threatened, you can be sure they will give a full confession.

STRENGTH 2, AGILITY 4, WITS 3, EMPATHY 4

HEALTH: 2

SKILLS: Close Combat 1, Heavy Machinery 1, Mobility 3, Piloting 2, Manipulation 3

TALENT: Stealthy

GEAR: A single VP-70 pistol between the two of them, $37,000 W-Y, transport tickets in the names of the xenoanthropologists, and a backpack with a steatite ampule within.

EVENTS

Spring some of these events on your players before they are approached by the android, and some after. Aside from Meeting Maitland, the events don't all need to occur, and they don't need to occur in the order listed. Instead, see the events as an arsenal of drama for you to use as you see fit.

INCOMING: A MiG-730 Aerospace Interceptor breaks through the battlelines and begins strafing the Spaceport. If running, the UA 102-20 Particle Beam Phalanx will shoot down the MiG's initial barrage so that the PCs have a chance to prepare a counterattack.

The PCs can try to take the MiG down using their APC or the MX11A1 Hovertread Light Infantry Vehicles located at the Vehicle Depot. See the vehicle combat rules on page 113 of the core rulebook.

If the PCs can't take down the MiG, any hit they make on the MiG that causes damage can cause the pilot to retreat (Dealer's Choice).

FOR GRANDMA: While the PCs search for the xenoanthropologists in the crowd, Annita and Salv—a couple of fugitive thieves (left)—mistakenly believe the PCs have identified them. They make a run for it. If caught, they will be carrying a backpack with what they claim is a metallic funeral urn for their grandmother's ashes (they brought them here to spread across the oceans).

In reality it is an Engineer's steatite ampule—the type used to carry the black goo. It has Engineer hieroglyphs along the side and is (mostly) empty. A single loose drop of goo inside could infect one person—Dealer's Choice. The infection will arrest itself at Stage II, leaving the victim covered in hideous black spidery veins (page 180). Luckily, the dose is not fatal.

If Maitland sees the ampule, he will confirm it was previously in the possession of his employers. He can translate the hieroglyphics on the urn—in his words it, "sings a song of black death" (it also includes the genetic marker decryption key that Deep Void is after).

UPPA SOLDIERS

These troops are the grunts of the Progressive People's Army—conscripted soldiers who want nothing more than to fulfill their state obligations and go back home. If facing certain death, they will surrender rather than die.

STRENGTH 4, AGILITY 4, WITS 3, EMPATHY

HEALTH: 4

SKILLS: Close Combat 2, Stamina 2, Ranged Combat 3, Mobility 2, Survival 1

TALENT: Hug the Dirt

GEAR: 6B90 Combat Armor, QSZ-203 Pistol, flashlight, AK-4047, four grenades, combat knife.

DROPSHIP DOWN: A UPP Krokodil dropship carrying two Ox Series HAMPVs attempts to land at the spaceport. Give the PCs a chance to shoot it down. If they hit the ship and cause any damage, they've managed to hit a critical system, spinning the dropship out of control. If they don't try, Traffic Controller Wu will use one of her tower rooftop M5 RPGs to take it down.

Either way, the Krok slams into the plateau and at least one of the Ox vehicles tumbles over the bluff to explode in the jungle below. The six surviving UPPA soldiers (previous page) will use the remaining Ox to assault the spaceport.

If the PCs defeat the UPPA soldiers and want to try to fix the Krok, it will take two hours to get her ready to fly.

MEET MAITLAND (MANDATORY): As the PCs wade through the crowds, they may notice a smiling man patiently waiting in a queue of nervous evacuees, wearing a gold Geholgod Institute ring. This is the codebreakers' assistant synthetic, Maitland (page 215). Suspecting they are neither Deep Black nor UPP, Maitland is appreciative of the PCs for coming to "rescue him." He will say the doctors are dead—murdered by black-suited commandos. If Annita and Salv come into play (see the event For Grandma), he could pin the deed on them. After the doctors' deaths, he committed their work to his android memory, destroyed the evidence, and made his escape.

He is, of course, only telling half-truths—he murdered them.

The ring is Chawla's. If asked about it, Maitland will look upset, then smile again, claiming it was a gift from the doctor. If the PCs push, Maitland suggests he may have murdered the doctors—but he simply has no memory of it (bullshit).

How your PCs proceed, of course, is up to them. Maitland will offer any information he has on the Engineer hieroglyphics and what they mean to Deep Void in exchange for protection. This evidence cannot be corroborated without sophisticated Hyperdyne equipment that the USCMC keeps in the Crestus Garrison Systems. It is, after all, "all in his head." Maitland seems sincere. He trusts the PCs to not turn him over to the Spec Ops marines. If the PCs insist on delivering him to their superiors instead, he will abide—if he goes back to Deep Black they'll take his data and deactivate him.

Seax does not know about any android—she's only looking for the missing doctors. If Maitland is scanned by Seax and the Blackguard, however, he will register as being a synthetic assigned to Drs. Liu and Chawla.

If the Blackguard learns of Maitland and what he's got in his head, they will try to subdue the android and behead him with a power tool. They will then take the (quite conscious) head with them. Maitland and all records of him will disappear—until he shows up again in the campaign finale Operation: Octopus Garden.

BLACKOUT! This event could be the result of a firefight, sabotage, or other violent action. The power station overloads and goes dark. **STRESS LEVEL** +1 for all PCs. It can be repaired with a **HEAVY MACHINERY** roll and one Turn of work. While the power is out, the UA 102-20 Particle Beam Phalanx will go into standby mode—either it needs to be rebooted to work off its own power for a bit or it needs to be hooked up to the APC's batteries or some other alternative power source. Of course, now would be a good time for a barrage of missiles to come in...

The darkness can be a good window to allow one of the other events to occur as well.

BLACK FRIDAY SALE: A transport arrives, and the people stampede towards it. The panicked mob could be seen as a menace, or as the cover they have needed to slip away unnoticed. It could be a deterrent to their plans, perhaps cutting them off from Maitland or the thieves Annita and Salv (see the event For Grandma). They could let the colonists trample each other to death, or they may even attempt to restore order.

BERSERKED! This event can play out if either the PCs call for reinforcements or the Blackguard becomes aware of Maitland. The UPP forces can be seen fighting the USCMC past the rainforests on the island's shore. While the Spaceport waits for the next transport to arrive, an apparent railgun strike hits the outer edge of the bluff, sending obsidian shards flying and creating a deep crater. Investigation reveals a large, modified Dead Drop pod has landed—one that deploys a single Berserker unit.

The PCs need to be careful approaching this deadly cyber-marine. Sent to keep inbound UPP from landing forces on the Obsidian Plateau, the Berserker will get confused and turn on friendly incoming craft as well. When a transport attempts to land to aid in the evacuation, the Berserker fires on the ship until she either destroys it or scares it off. The PCs must be careful here—push the Berserker too far and she could turn on the populace, wiping out the entire spaceport. They may have to find a way to subdue her, lead her away from Morgan's Bluff—or even destroy her.

USCMC BERSERKER

STRENGTH 6, AGILITY 3, WITS 2, EMPATHY 1

HEALTH: 8

SKILLS: Stamina 3 (6 in suit), Close Combat 2 (5), Mobility 3, Ranged Combat 4 (7)

TALENT: Tough, Killer, Rapid Fire

ARMOR RATING: 10

AIR SUPPLY: 8

GEAR: Mark 1 Mobile Offensive Exowarrior Suit with 25mm Gatling Gun, M240 Incinerator Unit, Stun Baton, U1 M40 Grenade Launcher, U4 Repeating Grenade Launcher with QTC firebomb ammunition, and Grasping Claws (Damage 2).

FINALE

An overwhelming UPP force attacks the spaceport, destroying the UA 102-20 Particle Beam Phalanx and power station before landing four Krokodil dropships within its gates and taking control. If the Berserkers were deployed, they take out at least half of them, but are destroyed as well. Aware of Maitland's existence through his communication with Mishka, the UPP immediately begins looking for him, not the xenospecialists.

Facing overwhelming odds, the PCs have several options on how to proceed—do they make a last stand, employ guerrilla tactics, or run? Do they fight to keep Maitland out of UPP hands or give up and surrender him in exchange for the lives of those at the spaceport? Regardless of their former relationship with the PCs, Sergeant Seax and the Blackguard will be steadfast allies against the UPP.

Let this play out as short or as long as everyone is engaged. Eventually, the PCs are going to get overwhelmed—there are simply too many UPP soldiers here. When things look to be their worst, they will receive a message over their helmet comms that the cavalry is on its way. The PCs won't know it, but they will need to hold out for another six Rounds (or less if you see fit) before USCMC forces arrive in the form of six UD-4S Skycrane Dropships carrying M40E Ridgeway tanks, escorted by a dozen AS-19C/D Bearcat Strikeships.

The UPP will retreat, and the USCMC (manipulated by Deep Void) will leave a garrison on Pandora to "protect the world from another invasion." In reality, it's an excuse to divert USCMC resources to Deep Void's nearby Darwin Island facility.

ALTERNATIVE USES

This Spaceport can be used outside of the Frontier War campaign. With a few minor adjustments to location descriptions, it can be adapted as a typical Frontier spaceport in a number of other scenarios on other worlds.

ABANDONED: An abandoned spaceport on an uninhabited and out-of-the-way planet would make a fine base for pirates, smugglers, covert operations teams and so on—even if a lot of the infrastructure has been removed. Rebels, disgruntled asteroid miners, rogue scientists, hijackers—all could ply their nefarious trade from this installation, until that is, the Colonial Marines are sent in to apprehend (or eliminate) them.

EVACUATED: A smuggled alien horror has broken free from its restraints in the spaceport's cargo center and is killing workers at a prodigious rate. The company has ordered the spaceport abandoned and the workers to be evacuated immediately. The Colonial Marines are ordered to provide defense for the port whilst the evacuation is underway. Only small starships that are in the area can make it in time to the spaceport, which means the evacuation will take 24 hours from the moment the Marines touch down. During that time the alien menace will be hounding the workers and eventually overrun the flimsy defenses of the spaceport. Where will the Marines make their stand? What is their plan? And what if that final rescue ship, with just enough hypersleep berths onboard for the Marines and the final twenty spaceport workers, never gets through?

MISSION 5: OPERATION DREAMCATCHER

TALOS CN-4 DECOMMISSIONED NETWORK RELAY STATION, BORDERLINE REGION

A UPP experiment in terror has driven entire colonies to psychotic behavior. The Ministry of Space Security is using an old Network station to broadcast horrific subliminal signals across the border—strange nightmarish frequencies transmitted from the hellish mind of an alien Queen! While the PCs are sent to eliminate the source of the signals, the Children of the Two Divines is moving in to liberate the Queen and unleash her on the Frontier itself.

WHAT'S THE SITUATION, MU/TH/UR?

As the PCs board the USS *Tamb'Itam* for their next mission, they are gathered in the hangar bay for a quick pre-cryosleep briefing. Their CO begins:

"For the past two months, anyone entering this sector of space has had vivid nightmares—ones so bad that they are causing violence. Scientists on an asteroid in the GL884 system vented their dome and blew themselves into space. The crew of the USCSS Dahlia murdered each other in horrific ways. This isn't a case of one maniac against the crew—this was the entire crew against each other. 1,300 miners in deep sleep arrived at LV-176 dead—each had killed themselves in their cryo chambers while they were supposed to be sleeping.

Intel has triangulated a central point to all the incidents—right where a decommissioned W-Y Network station sits. The thing is supposed to be off the grid, but it's active and transmitting some psycho shit that's causing colonists to go crazy.

You're going in to retake the station. We could just nuke it out of the sky, but we can only assume it isn't the only one they've got. R&D wants to know what the fuck they are doing and how the fuck it works so we can counter it. Take prisoners, collect data, secure the weapon, and lock down the station.

This is a decommissioned Wey-You installation—so we've got the original schematics for your perusal. Don't count on the layout being exactly the same—they've probably changed a few things. We're giving you breaching charges for this one—just in case you need to make your own door to get aboard. You'll be driving yourselves in via Service Skiff. Don't worry—you'll be rigged for silent running, and the Tamb'Itam will be on station in-system and come to your aid when you've got a better grasp of the situation.

The PCs then enter cryosleep for the trip to Talos station. When they arrive at their destination, they are soaked in sweat. They have all had vivid nightmares while in stasis—read the boxed text below or use it as inspiration. This will give your players a taste of what's to come.

A MOTHER'S LOVE

It's pitch dark. The humidity is palpable, the air too heavy to breath. You grope in blackness, looking for an exit, but thick fleshy walls impede your every movement. These walls pulse and exhale. These walls are alive. Your lungs fill with viscous liquid, but you're not drowning. You are warm, safe—back in your mother's womb.

A woman stands over you—an ebon figure against the starless void.

"Love me," she whispers. Your mother pulls you close to her bosom. You try to meet her eyes, but they are empty pools. All you see is her smiling metal mouth. Her sharp breath startles you awake—it was only a dream. You retch bile as your cryopod hums and slides open. Your shirt and shorts are drenched—you are covered in a sparkling sheen of sweat. "It's over," you hear someone mutter. The words were your own. They are met with silence. Your arms are crisscrossed with open wounds. You are alone.

The other stasis pods are closed—your fellow marines still asleep. Their canopies are filled with a thick velvet fluid which could only be one thing. The hairs on your neck stand rigid as your mother embraces you from behind, her rancid breath hissing in your ear. "Kill for me."

The other pods cycle open, spilling their life blood across the deck and washing you away in a torrent of red.

GEAR UP

The PCs have access to their standard gear for this mission, as well as Mk.35 Compression Suits and a Lunnar-Welsun Service Skiff—two if there are more than four PCs. Each Skiff has two Armat Type 4 Breaching Charges, a maintenance jack, and one canister of CN-20 Nerve Agent aboard. The Skiffs have limited passenger room, so the PCs will have to pilot the small ships themselves. This is a covert mission, so no dropship is allowed.

WHAT THE HELL IS REALLY GOING ON?

Talos serves two purposes for the Ministry of Space Security (MSS)—electronic surveillance platform and psychological warfare engine. First, the station spies on the Network for the MSS—scanning and copying sensitive messages from Earth, colonies on the Frontier, and both civilian and military starships.

Second, Talos is a field test site for Project Morana—an MSS experiment that collects the maddening dreams of a sleeping Xenomorph Queen. While Morana's main purpose is to use this information to control the Queen—they stumbled upon an unexpected side effect—exposure to the Queen's subconscious mind drives people mad. Talos has weaponized this.

The station encodes a subliminal track containing the recorded Queen's dreams into all intercepted messages before passing them on. An active relay that is still part of the Network unknowingly amplifies these signals and bounces them to their intended destination—in essence exposing every colonist and starfarer within a two-parsec radius to madness. The Project's next phase will be to enhance the output to carry through all Network relays without signal decay, affecting anyone within the 40-parsec wide Network.

But the fanatical group called the Children of the Two Divines (page 211) has also heard the Queen's call, and led by ex-MSS android Mishka, they have come to liberate the slumbering Queen and take her home with them to breed.

The PCs can stop the Queen's Dreams broadcast by shutting down the transmitters at the Com Relay Operations Hub, by severing the station's Gimbal Arms, or by irreparably damaging the Com Dishes themselves. Also, of course, by blowing up the damn station.

METAPUZZLE PIECES

While Frontier War missions can be played in any order, escalating clues called epiphanies occur in a predetermined sequence (see the Metapuzzle on page 193). Relevant metapuzzle pieces for this mission can be learned from the defector Chief Maslov, the Android Dream Technician Sergi, political prisoner Weber, Mother Mishka, and the Talos IV station's Data Servers. The captive Queen and her dream transmissions prove the existence of Project Morana and the Darkstar Program.

WHERE THE ENEMIES ARE

Talos station is a quiet little nightmare satellite in the middle of nowhere that is about to become an under siege clusterfuck.

- **The Corvus salvage ship SS *Magdalene* is inbound to board the station at the Main External Airlock. The ship is carrying Mother Mishka and a dozen fanatics from the Children of the Two Divines. Their holy mission: free the Queen.**
- **Two UPP Space Operating Force (SOF) Accipiter dropships are patrolling the area as the PCs approach Talos. Each is crewed by two SOF commandos with Commandant Võ/Vũ (page 208) amongst them. They are here to protect Talos and its assets from any invaders—PC or otherwise.**
- **There are six SOF commandos spread throughout the station: one outside the Rec Room, two in the Com Relay Operations Hub with a crew member, one unconscious in the Medlab, and the final two are extravehicular, patrolling the exterior of Talos. They, too, are here to protect Talos.**
- **Ministry of Space Security (MSS) Controller Acosta is in the Data Servers. Chief Engineer Maslov is passed out somewhere on the station (see the event Defective). Dr. Savina is in the Doctor's Office and the final three crew member are located in the Crew Cabins, and the Dish Gimbal Arms. Maslov wants to defect. While Acosta is out for himself and Savina is an unwitting servant of the Queen, the rest of the crew are just here to do their national duty and rotate back to civilian life.**
- **Four David 5 synthetics repurposed as MSS Pawn Dream Technician androids are on duty at the Control Center. Three of them are hostile—devoted to Project Morana and protecting the Queen asset. The one called Sergei cares more about protecting all humankind, and thus is a potential ally.**
- **Finally, an immature Xenomorph Queen sleeps in the coolant tank that is her cryosleep chamber. Her goal is to assert mental dominance over whomever it takes to get her off this station and to a colony where she can breed.**

INSERTION

The *Tamb'Itam* drops the PCs beyond the system's asteroid belt to avoid detection, immediately runs dark, and launches the team's Skiff(s). As the PCs approach the station, two UPP Accipiter dropships soar right past the PCs at high speed.

One of them circles back, having detected the Skiff's ping. Ask the PCs if they want to power down their sensors and/or engines to avoid being target locked. Then roll **COMTECH** for the Accipiter pilot (**WITS** 3, **COMTECH** 2), modified by the Skiff's Signature (–3) and the table on page 190 in the core rulebook. If the roll fails, the Accipiters leave immediately, headed back on their previous course. If the roll succeeds, the Accipiters will circle back around, looking for the PCs, looming closer and closer (+1 **STRESS LEVEL**). Before the PCs are exposed, however, the UPP ships suddenly take off away from the station.

Should the PCs reactivate their sensors, they will register the Accipiters racing to intercept a small freighter of some kind that has entered the system (the PCs won't know it now, but this is the Corvus-Class salvage ship, SS *Magdalene*—a ship belonging to the Children of the Two Divines. If you choose to bring them into play later, see the Event "God Save the Queen" on page 312.

The Accipiters are crewed by Commandant Võ/Vũ and her SOF commandos, two crew per ship. If the PCs decide to follow the UPP dropships, they will likely be discovered. If they are, play this out using the space combat rules—initial distance is four zones and initial approach velocity is 1. This will likely end badly for the PCs, as the Skiffs are unarmed. The Accipiter crews will attempt to bring the PCs back to Talos as prisoners—more test subjects for the Queen's Dreams.

BOARDING THE STATION

Talos Relay Station was not designed to withstand any kind of assault. It is an unarmed and unarmored Network relay. If Talos Station comes under fire, it should be noted that it has no FTL drive, no thrusters, Hull 5, and Armor Rating 5. Sensor pings will reveal a few different ways to gain entry to the station:

- The PCs can spacewalk to the station and enter at either the Main or Auxiliary Airlock.
- They can use their breaching charges to blow a hole in the hull (Armor Rating 5).
- Sensors show the station's reactor is vacuum cooled, which means there are vents that can be used to board her. Once every hour, the Reactor Lock is sealed and depressurized. Person-sized vents open that expose the reactor chamber to space, expelling Medium radiation for a Turn before they close again (page 110 of the core rulebook). The reactor lock is then re-pressurized and the cycle begins again. Enterprising PCs can use this process to covertly board the station. A **MOBILITY** roll is necessary to push forward against the venting radiation. One attempt can be made each Turn. Once inside the reactor room, the PCs need only wait for the vents to close and the room to repressurize.

Defenses are minimal. The six-commando Space Operating Forces contingent onboard is equipped with CCC5 Compression Suits with AK-104 Suit Guns, but the rest of the crew has no real weapons. The station's defenders will use the transmitters on Talos to jam all in-system communications, preventing the PCs from contacting the *Tamb'Itam*. The jamming can be shut down at the Com Relay Operations Hub or bypassed by hacking the junction boxes on the station's exterior.

THE NETWORK

The Weyland-Yutani communications grid stretches across colonized space using a combination of manned relay stations and unmanned signal satellites to route messages to their destination. Collectively, this 40-parsec sphere around earth is called the Network. While Network signals travel at FTL speeds, communications can still be slow, taking days or weeks to arrive. Such messages can be very expensive and thus are usually also very short.

TALOS NETWORK RELAY STATION

Weyland-Yutani's CN class stations like Talos are situated in remote and out-of-the way places, on the fringes of inhabited systems or in totally uninhabited star systems. Each station is established in a high, geosynchronous orbit around a stable moon or planet. Located deep in the Borderline Region, Talos was retired by Weyland-Yutani about a decade ago. Unfortunately, the decommission crew performed a sloppy partial wipe of its computer core and just left it there to rot in space. When a UPP freighter stumbled into it, Ministry of Space Security technicians were able to use its old access codes to reestablish an exploitable link to the Network. Talos was used as a simple electronic surveillance platform monitoring the UA Frontier. Nowadays, it is used for Project Marano's experiment in terror.

A NOTE FROM MU/TH/UR: Talos has no lifeboats of any kind. The MSS determined that removing a black site station's EEVs deterred revolts and escape attempts amongst workers and prisoners. There aren't even airlocks where the pods used to be—new bulkheads were built over the former bays. ■

SOF COMMANDOS

Commandant Võ/Vũ commands a skilled team of Space Operating Forces to protect Talos Station.

STRENGTH 5, AGILITY 4, WITS 3, EMPATHY 2

HEALTH: 5

SKILLS: Close Combat 4, Stamina 1, Mobility 2, Ranged Combat 4, Piloting 3, Comtech 2, Survival 1

TALENT: Zero-G Training

GEAR: CCC5 Compression Suit, AK-104 Suit Gun, QSZ-203 Pistol, flashlight, combat knife.

THE QUEEN'S DREAMS

The Queen's Dreams are the stuff of nightmares. Indescribable to humankind, they are truly alien.

SUBLIMINAL: Talos broadcasts the Queen's Dreams Broadcast on frequencies across the region. Any network satellite, ship, or planetary transmitter/receptor arrays monitoring open comm channels within a one parsec radius of the station will be affected. For every Shift a PC is exposed, they gain +1 STRESS LEVEL. Sleep is impossible, and stress cannot be relieved.

REMOTE VIEWING: Real time images of the Queen's Dreams play on all the Holotabs in the Control Center, appearing as a strange floating psychotic symphony of colors and sound. Anyone looking at them must make a successful EMPATHY roll (the attribute only, no skill) or be lost in the signal, entranced and immobilized. Each Turn, the victim can try to look away again. Every Round a PC stares at the images, they gain +1 STRESS LEVEL. A slap in the face or other successful physical attack against the PC will immediately free them.

DIRECT CONTACT: If the dreams are viewed via Neuro Visor, things get a little stranger. In addition to the effects of Remote Viewing, the viewer must make a Panic Roll when accessing the dreams, and again for each Round of viewing.

CRANK UP THE VOLUME: If the signal is amped and broadcast at short range (such as over the station's internal comms), the effects are the same as for Direct Contact (above) instead of Subliminal. See the event "Triggered" for more.

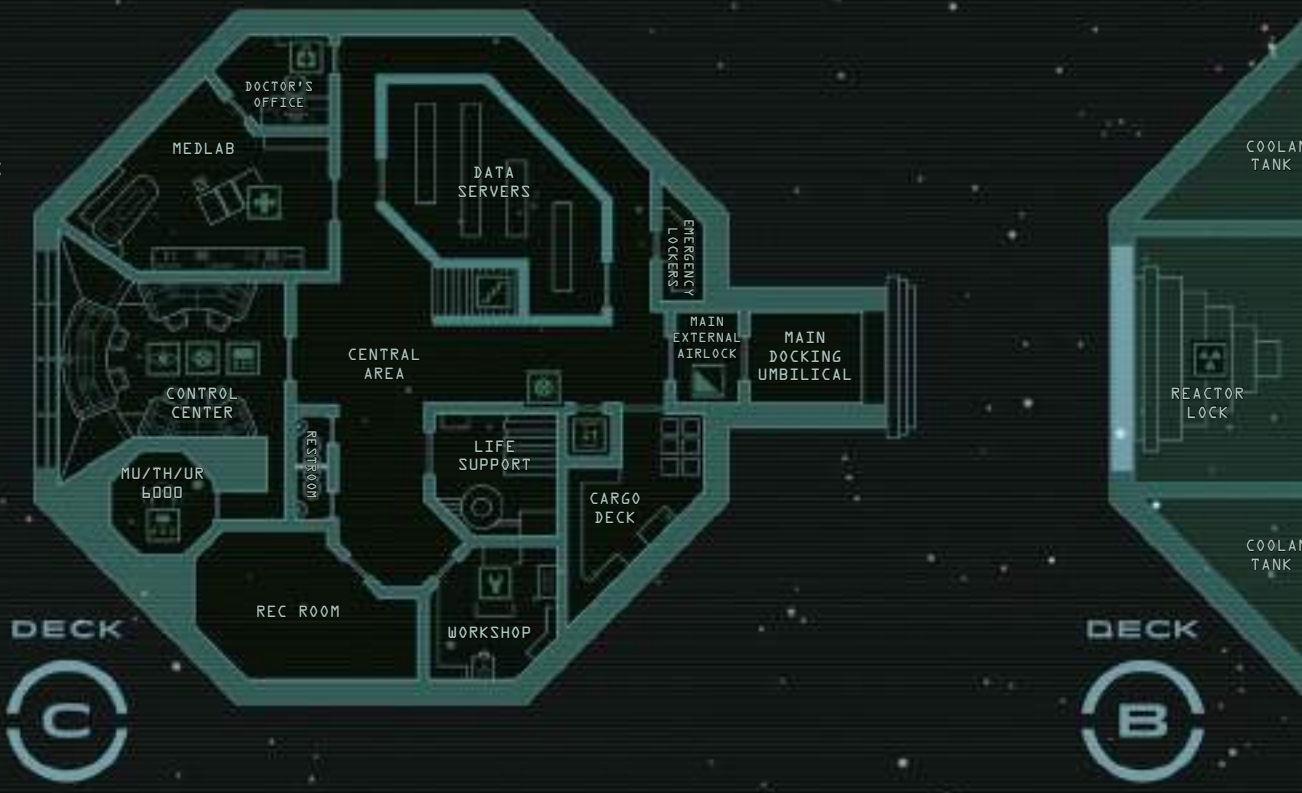
QUEEN'S COMMANDS: Project Morana research implies the sleeping Queen can implant a posthypnotic suggestion in someone remote viewing or making director contact with her dreams—such as ordering them to release her, restrain someone, or even kill themselves. This is an issue for the PCs in the event "Triggered."

TALOS

STATION

ACCESS TERMINAL
WORKSHOP
MEDKIT
ELEVATOR
INTERCOM
MEDLAB
AIRLOCK
STAIRS
MAINFRAME
EVA SUIT STORAGE
RADIOACTIVE AREA
OBSERVATION
ARMORY

1X1 METERS



NETWORK RELAY STATION

CN CLASS OPERATING PLATFORM

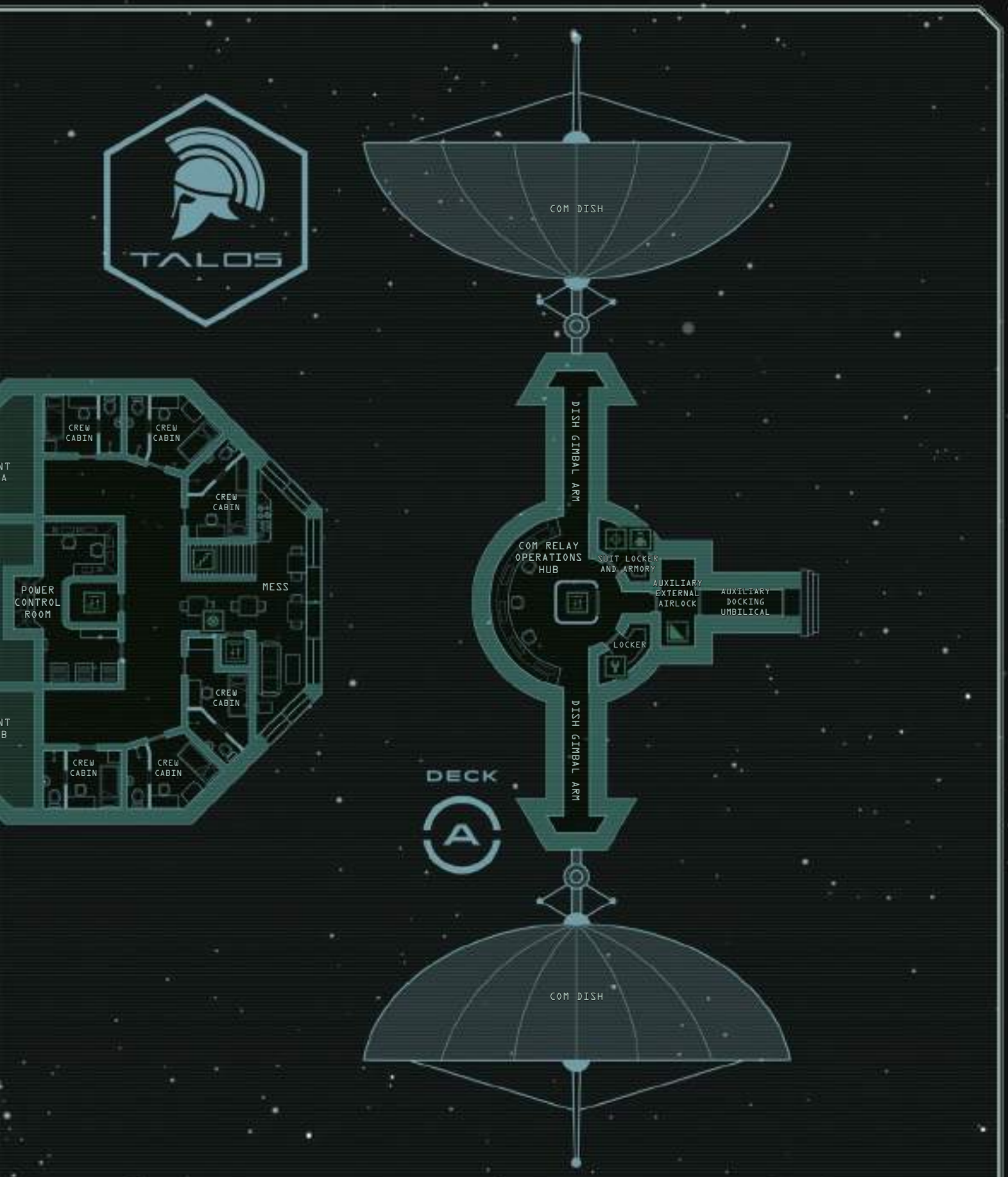
CREW: 12

MANUFACTURER: Weyland-Yutani

LENGHT: 74 meters

NUMBER BUILT: 14

MASS: 810,000 kg


TALOS
COM DISH
DISH GIMBAL ARM
CREW CABIN
CREW CABIN
CREW CABIN
POWER CONTROL ROOM
MESS
CREW CABIN
CREW CABIN
CREW CABIN
COM RELAY OPERATIONS HUB
SUIT LOCKER AND ARMORY
AUXILIARY EXTERNAL AIRLOCK
AUXILIARY DOCKING UMBILICAL
LOCKER
DISH GIMBAL ARM
DECK
A
COM DISH

LOCATIONS

CONTROL CENTER: A large, open operations room, the Control Center is filled with computer terminals, wall monitors, life support/engineering stations and six Holotab viewing tables (page 132 of the core rulebook). A large picture window gives a view of outer space and there is access here to MU/TH/UR 6000.

Once, this Control Center ran the Network Station. Now, it is devoted to monitoring the Queen. Mesmerizing holograms are projected from four of the Holotabs—they are mapping the Queen's mind as she dreams in her Chamber. Each Holotab is equipped with a Neuro Visor (page 134 of the core rulebook) that can directly access the Queen's Dreams. There are four Pawn androids (below) on duty here, Neuro Visors engaged—they are watching the dreams and both writing and drawing impressions based on them). For the effects of the visor and holograms, see "The Queens Dreams" on page 301.

Shortly after the PCs enter the center, one of the androids—Sergei—will remove his helmet and ask if he can help them (see MSS Pawn Dream Technicians below). Unlike his fellow Pawns, Sergei doesn't like the Queen or Project Morana. A glitch in his UPP behavioral matrix makes him believe he exists to serve "the people" in general—he makes no distinction between people from the UPP and UA.

MSS PAWN DREAM TECHNICIAN ANDROIDS

Space Security Pawn units are modified David 5 androids that have been fine-tuned for cataloging and interpreting the Queen's Dreams. Named Sergei, Anton, Aleks, and Mikel, all four Pawns on Talos have red hair and green eyes. They are quite polite, but hard to read. While Sergei finds the Queen disturbing, Anton, Aleks, and Mikel are quite enamored with her. Like all UPP androids, the Pawns have inferior joints.

STRENGTH 7, AGILITY 5, WITS 4, EMPATHY 4

HEALTH: 7

SKILLS: Mobility 2, Comtech 5, Observation 3

TALENT: Watchful

GEAR: P-DAT, Neuro Visor.

SUBSTANDARD COMPONENTS: The UPP uses lower grade materials, meaning any critical injury on this model of synthetic always triggers two rolls on the chart for critical injuries on synthetics on page 111 of the ALIEN RPG core rulebook.

POLITICAL PRISONERS

The experimental subjects on Talos station are former UPP politicians who objected to the Darkstar Program. Rather than risk them exposing the project, the MSS sent them here to be subjected to the terror inside an alien mind. One of them, Frederick Shal, is dead, and two of them—Zo Tran and Bao Mendoza—are in bad shape. The fourth prisoner, Mal Weber, is frazzled but in better shape than the others. He is a good source for information on Darkstar and he is seeking political asylum in exchange for it.

STRENGTH 2, AGILITY 3, WITS 5, EMPATHY 4

HEALTH: 2

SKILLS: Command 3, Manipulation 4, Observation 3

TALENT: Personal Safety

GEAR: Nothing.

STATION PERSONNEL

These statistics are shared by Comtech Kiev in the Crew Cabins, Comtech Leon at the Com Relay Operations Hub, and Mechanic First Class Sal, located within Dish Gimbal Arm A/B.

STRENGTH 4, AGILITY 3, WITS 4, EMPATHY 3

HEALTH: 4

SKILLS: Heavy Machinery 3, Piloting 1, Comtech 2

TALENT: Spaceship Mechanic

GEAR: Flashlight, tool kit, hand radio.

FAUSTO ACOSTA

MSS CONTROLLER

Acosta doesn't know how to do his job very well, but he knows how to assemble a crew that does—a crew that will make him look good. He's been living off the competence of others for years, and while his Ministry of Space Security superiors are aware of it, they don't care—all that matters is the job is done. Between the presence of Commandant Võ/Vũ and Dr. Savina, he feels he will soon be deemed redundant, and is taking steps to protect himself by copying Project Marano records to use as a bargaining chip.

STRENGTH 2, AGILITY 3, WITS 4, EMPATHY 5

HEALTH: 2

SKILLS: Heavy Machinery 1, Comtech 2, Command 3, Manipulation 2

TALENT: Take Control

GEAR: PQSZ-203 Pistol, six G2 Shock Grenades, G2 remote detonator (can detonate the synced G2's from LONG Range), three 120TB Magnetic Tapes (stolen Project Marano data), hand radio.

OLIEN SAVINA

MSS DOCTOR OF XENO-PSYCHOBIOLOGY

While Dr. Savina is a competent physician, her purpose on Talos is twofold—keep the Queen healthy and monitor the effects of her dreams on others. As the experiment has progressed, Savina has noticed the psychological well-being of the entire crew of Talos Station deteriorating. Suspecting this is a side effect of the Queen's Dreams, she has not reported the phenomena to Acosta and instead has transmitted her findings directly to the MSS. Savina feels she is immune to the effects. She most certainly is not—in fact she is under the Queen's thrall and doesn't know it (see the event Triggered). She is more concerned with her research and the Queen's safety than she is with her fellow workers, and will work with the PCs and/or the Children of the Two Divines if it will mean the Queen's safety. The Androids report directly to Dr. Savina rather than Controller Acosta.

STRENGTH 2, AGILITY 4, WITS 3, EMPATHY 5

HEALTH: 2

SKILLS: Close Combat 2, Mobility 2, Medicine 3, Manipulation 4

TALENT: Field Surgeon

GEAR: Surgical kit, medkit, P-DAT, Bionational TX-9 Chemical and Biological Air Injection Pistol (with six double-potent Neversleep doses and two doses of Naproleve).

MU/TH/UR 6000: The brain of the station, MU/TH/UR keeps Talos functioning. Station Controller Acosta and SOF Commandant Võ/Vũ each have a "Dog Tag" Military ID Key that allows them to enter the station's Weyland-Yutani computer core. Once inside, an authorization code will jettison the Queen's Chamber coolant tank from the station (see the event Do Androids Dream of Ejected Queens?).

If the PCs don't have one of the ID keys, they can force the door with a successful **HEAVY MACHINERY** roll and one Turn of work. If they don't have the code, a successful **COMTECH** roll will still eject the Queen. The Queen can only be jettisoned from this location. With access, MU/TH/UR can be persuaded to do things like shut doors, fire thrusters, and other non-life-threatening activities. In addition to the three station personnel above, the android Pawn Sergei has the code.

"WRECKED ROOM": Originally an open-plan Rec Room for Weyland-Yutani employees on extended assignment, this area has been converted into a padded and sealed observation area to examine the concentrated prolonged effects the transmitted Queen's Dreams have on test subjects. Due to the carnage that happens here, the station's UPP crew refers to this place as the "Wrecked Room." Transmitters in the room broadcast the Queen's signal subsonically. This room can be observed from the Control Center next door through a shielded one-way viewport.

The Wrecked Room is currently living up to its nickname. Furniture inside is smashed, the wall padding is ripped and hanging like drapes, and there is a pool of dried blood on the floor. There are four political prisoners huddled here (page 304). A lone SOF Commando (page 301) stands watch outside the door.

WORKSHOP: Being so remote, the station must be able to fabricate a large number of key mechanical and electronic components. There are several fabrication machines here, along with spares, raw materials and tools. Fixing something here affords a +3 bonus to **HEAVY MACHINERY** rolls.

LIFE SUPPORT: Air scrubbers, water purification tanks and heating units are located in this bay. If a CN-20 Nerve Agent Canister is dropped into the air scrubbers, it will spread to every compartment of the station over the next Turn.

CARGO DECK: This cargo bay is located next to the Main External Airlock with a door wide enough to accept cargo pallets. This room is used to store crew supplies of food, components and other items.

AUXILIARY ELEVATOR: Stairs located in the central area are normally used by the crew to move from one deck to another, but for small cargoes or heavy items, this lift is used.

MAIN EXTERNAL AIRLOCK: This airlock is for loading and unloading of personnel and supplies. The door here is wide and tall enough to accept cargo pallets and Xenomorph Queens. A successful **HEAVY MACHINERY** roll will open the door. If using a maintenance jack, the PC receives a +2 **BONUS** to the roll.

MAIN DOCKING UMBILICAL: This zero-G corridor telescopes out to meet the airlock of an arriving vessel, allowing personnel and cargo to transfer from one to another without using a pressure suit.

A NOTE FROM MU/TH/UR: Sergei's glitch has caused him to develop an emotional bond with Chief Engineer Maslov (page 310). The android considers Maslov a true friend and wants to help him escape the MSS. He's watched Maslov destroy himself with alcohol and has surmised that getting him away from the station might see an end to this behavior. He also believes Maslov will be murdered after his usefulness to Project Morana has ended. He will want the PCs to take Maslov with them. ■

EMERGENCY LOCKERS: These clearly labeled lockers contain fire-fighting equipment, first aid kits, fire axes, and oxygen masks.

DATA SERVERS: This noisy server room controls the vast flow of data coming in from the receiving dish and prepares it for dispatch to the transmitting dish. Buffers and back-up units contain large amounts of previously sent encrypted messages. These servers are independent of MU/TH/UR 6000's mainframe.

Controller Acosta (page 305) is here. If the station is not under attack, he is making personal copies of some of the drives for insurance against Dr. Savina (page 305) replacing him. If the station is on alert, he will be setting up six G2 Electroshock grenades. He will sync them and will detonate them via remote. If they go off, the servers will suffer severe EMP damage, making most of the data irretrievable.

The PCs can take drives from these servers as evidence (see Metapuzzle Pieces on page 298).

CENTRAL AREA: Around ten meters across, this space connects the most important areas of A Deck.

MEDLAB: A fully equipped medical bay, with an AutoDoc. There is a bed with a screen for a single patient as well as a cryogenic pod for the emergency freezing of injured or dying patients. An unconscious SOF commando in the AutoDoc is the only one here. He was exposed to vacuum due to a faulty CCC5 Compression Suit. If there is any fighting here, he will wake up.

DOCTOR'S OFFICE: The station's doctor has a workstation and computer terminal here, as well as an examination table and a medicine locker. In the locker are six portable medkits, a dozen prefilled Naproleve syringes, and two dozen doses of Neversleep. Dr. Savina (page 305) is here, examining the Dream Technicians' notes and their drawings of the Queen's Dreams.

MESS: This dining area and off-duty lounge has large viewing ports out into space. A small galley allows for food preparation.

CREW CABINS: These crew cabins are all double berths—staff are expected to share their cramped accommodation. Includes bed, shower and toilet, desk, closet and entertainment console. If no alarms have gone off, station Comtech Kiev is here, asleep.

COOLANT TANKS/QUEEN'S CHAMBER: Supercooled liquid hydrogen coolant for the fusion reactor is normally stored here in these twin tanks. Only Tank A is used for coolant now, however—Tank B has been drained, fitted with an access port, and converted into a giant cryochamber for a captive immature Xenomorph Queen (page 312 of the core rulebook). Not yet full size, she is only four meters. A viewport in the door allows Talos crew to visually monitor the Queen directly. She has no ovipositor. Unless an event indicates otherwise, she is curled up here, hibernating with a crown of electrodes drilled into her crested head. One SOF commando stands guard outside Tank B.

Thick cables run from Tank B along the ceiling. The first two cables lead to the Control Center and the Doctor's Office. Severing them will disrupt monitoring of the Queen's Dreams in the Command Center and the Doctor's Office. The third is a power cable that runs to the Fusion Reactor Lock. Cut the power to the Queen's cryosleep chamber and there are severe consequences—the tank can no longer be jettisoned. Even worse, the Queen wakes up. See the event Poking the Bear for that little disaster.

POWER CONTROL ROOM: The fusion reactor is monitored and maintained from this location. The station's auto-destruct can be activated from here. The procedure is similar to the system on a Bison class freighter, except only Controller Acosta and Chief Engineer Maslov (page 310) have the memorized codes. If the PCs want to hack it, a successful (–2) **COMTECH** roll will do it. Failure will set off the station's alarms. If activated, the countdown is ten minutes (two Turns) until detonation. After five minutes (one Turn), the process cannot be reversed.

REACTOR LOCK: The small, micro-fusion reactor here produces power for the entire station. Because the second cooling tank is being used as a cryochamber for the Queen, the reactor has been configured for vacuum cooling. As such, it can be used as an emergency way in-and-out of the station (see Boarding the Station on page 300 for details on how this works).

If the PCs at any point decide to enter the Reactor Lock and wreck the reactor, it has an Armor Rating of 12 against firearms and explosives. If it is successfully damaged, an alarm klaxon will sound. After a two Round countdown, the external vents will open, the interior doors will seal, and the chamber will flood with Extreme radiation. In three Turns (or whenever is dramatically appropriate), the reactor will explode, vaporizing the station.

CENTRAL ELEVATOR: This elevator takes staff from B Deck of the Primary Section down inside the truss to the Operations Section, where the signal dishes are located.

COM RELAY OPERATIONS HUB: This area contains all of the consoles and instruments for controlling the FTL transmitter and receiver. Positioning and thruster control is also maintained here. Comtech Leon is on duty, running diagnostic tests. Leon will pretend to be a friend to the PCs, but will double-cross them as soon as possible to gain the favor of the MSS.

The Queen's Dreams broadcast and all communications jamming can be shut down from this area with a successful **COMTECH** roll. Two SOF Commandos (page 301) guard the room.

LOCKER: This locker contains tools for repair and maintenance of the hyperwave transmission equipment.

SUIT LOCKER AND ARMORY: A dozen CCC5 Compression Suits and other equipment used in space walks are stored here in lockers with plexiglass doors. Six of the CCC5s are equipped with AK-104 Suit Guns.

AUXILIARY EXTERNAL AIRLOCK: This airlock is used by the SOF to board their Accipiters. Station personnel use it for outside access to the dishes and stabilizing machinery.

EXTRAVEHICULAR ACTIVITIES

If the PCs want to call the *Tamb'Itam* for assistance while the broadcast is still running and choose not to go to the Com Relay Operations Hub, they can go extravehicular and hack directly into the station's external transmitters. Hacking the transmitters can be accomplished from any junction box on the station's exterior. It requires successful COMTECH and HEAVY MACHINERY rolls, plus one Turn of uninterrupted work.

Alternatively, they may go outside the ship to repair some kind of damage sustained through either sabotage or combat. External repairs will take successful HEAVY MACHINERY Rolls based on the extent of the damage (Game Mother's choice), but will only be temporary.

Whatever the reason the PCs may opt to go outside, they face two possible threats. If the Xenomorph Queen is already extravehicular (see the events Poking the Bear, Triggered, and/or Do Androids Dream of Ejected Queens?) she will ambush the PCs just as they start their work. Otherwise, the PCs will be attacked by the two SOF Commandos in CCC5 Compression Suits with AK-104 Suit Guns that stalk the outside of the station.

AUXILIARY DOCKING UMBILICAL: The access tube telescopes out to meet the lock of an arriving vessel, allowing personnel to transfer from one airlock to another without a pressure suit.

DISH GIMBAL ARM A/B: These pivoting extenders each have an accessway that leads to one of the com-dishes and gives access to crucial operational machinery that steers the dish with micrometer precision. If the PCs want to blow up the dishes, inside or outside of these two extensions is a good place to do it. Mechanic First Class Sal is here in whichever arm the PCs enter first, replacing a loose panel. She doesn't want any trouble but will defend herself if necessary. She has a Watatsumi DV-303 Bolt Gun.

COM DISH: These transmitter and receiver dishes are twenty meters in diameter and controlled by gimballed machinery. They are transmitting the Queen's Dreams across the sector and are controlled at.The dishes are quite delicate, (Armor Rating 3) and must be checked often for meteoroid damage by technicians via spacewalk. Based on older technology, the station's transmitters are capable of relaying messages at an FTL speed of 6.

Blowing up these dishes will end the Queen's Dreams broadcast, but also cause a hull breach in the corresponding accessway (see page 107 of the core rulebook for explosive decompression and vacuum exposure). Failure of the corresponding **STAMINA** roll means the character is blown out into space. Success means they need to get to an (automatically closed) airlock. A successful **HEAVY MACHINERY** roll will open the lock and get them to safety.

RESTROOM: Toilet facilities for the use of crew while on duty.

A NOTE FROM MU/TH/UR: When it's appropriate to the plot, have Tran and Mendoza lose their shit. See the Panic Roll chart on page 105 and pick an appropriate result for each of them. Of course, the two of them losing it will increase the PCs' own STRESS LEVEL. ■

EVENTS

Here are some events that you can spring on the players—many of which revolve around her majesty, the Xenomorph Queen. The events don't all need to occur, and they don't need to occur in the order listed. Instead, see the events as an arsenal of drama for you to use as you see fit.

DEFECTIVE: Wherever the PCs are, they stumble across what looks like a body slumped in a dark corner. It is Chief Engineer Maslov (next page), passed out drunk with two empty bottles of brandy from the UA. Maslov will be disorientated but will be happy to see the PCs. He actually leaked the station's location to the USCMC, and he's hoping the PCs will help him defect. He can explain anything they need to know about the experiment and can tell them about the station personnel. Maslov has memorized the reactor's self-destruct codes for use in the Power Control Room. The MSS Pawn android Sergei in the Control Center is his ally and will also help.

MAKSIM MASLOV

CHIEF ENGINEER

Maslov is a damn fine engineer—so fine he was looking at a prestigious position at Norcomm. Last year, however, Maslov's wife attempted to defect to the UA. She was caught and executed—and he was punished for her actions. He was banished to this station and is pretty sure that when its usefulness is up, he will be retired with it. With very little left to lose, Maslov keeps her in tiptop shape, and spends all his off time buried in booze, cards, and cigarettes. Maslov deals with the recurring nightmares of his wife's death by self-medicating with booze.

Because of his personal losses at the hands of his government, Maslov leaked the station's coordinates to the USCMC. He wants off Talos and to go live a decadent life in the United American inner core colonies. Strung out and afraid to close his eyes, he hasn't been to sleep in 72 hours—placing him in a weak mental condition that would make him ripe for subliminal manipulation by the Queen.

STRENGTH 5, AGILITY 4, WITS 3, EMPATHY 2

HEALTH: 5

SKILLS: Close Combat 2, Heavy Machinery 3, Mobility 3

TALENT: Spaceship Mechanic

GEAR: Flashlight, tool kit, two bottles of brandy, carton of Balaji cigarettes, deck of cards, hand radio.

POKING THE BEAR: This event happens if power is cut to the Queen's Chamber, or if her stasis is interrupted in any way. The immature Xenomorph Queen will wake up, shake off her stiffness, and begin pounding on the door to get out. After throwing herself against the door for a bit, she will stop, examine her surroundings, and tear her own arm off! (–1 **HEALTH** for the Queen). Acid will splatter across the room and burn a large hole through the hull (see rules for acid splash on page 298 of the core rulebook). Exposed to vacuum, the Queen will brace herself as the air inside quickly vents into space, then disappear out the hole into the void.

As she can be heard clattering around on the outer hull, there are other issues—some of that acid spattered on the door itself and is beginning to eat through it. At the appropriately dramatic moment, the acid will sizzle through a large chunk of door, exposing the corridor to vacuum (see the explosive decompression rules on page 107 of the core rulebook). What the Queen does outside is covered in the Finale on page 313.

TRIGGERED: The station is in chaos, and Dr. Savina takes matters into her own hands. Attempting to repel the invaders (PCs and/or the Children of the Two Divines), Savina "cranks up the volume" (see page 301) on the Queen's Dreams and broadcasts them over the station's internal speakers. Unless the PCs are wearing their compression suit helmets and think to turn off their comms, they need to make immediate Panic Rolls and then an **EMPATHY** roll to avoid being enthralled for a Round.

Additionally, the Queen will use the heightened signal to get in everyone's head and make them do her bidding. If the Queen isn't out of her chamber yet, the message will simply be, "Release me." If she is out already, the message will be "Take me to a planet to breed."

Choose one PC to direct the message to. If their **EMPATHY** roll fails, this PC believes the Queen is their loving mother—they want nothing more than to protect and serve her. The PC must follow the Queen's command for one Turn, after which another **EMPATHY** roll can be made. You can handle this via a secret instruction to the player, or by temporarily taking control of the PC, depending on what works best for your group.

The Queen will not attack anyone in her thrall. If someone opens the door for her, the immature Queen will squeeze herself through the main corridor and make her way to the Main External Airlock. Despite her smaller stature, the Queen's size still puts her at a disadvantage in the main corridor—She had to crouch to make her way through (–3 **MOBILITY**). She can't make it into station areas and doorways that are less than three meters wide. If a ship is at the airlock, she will board it. If not, she will examine the airlock, stab at the controls with her fingers, and let herself outside (see the Finale). If the Queen makes it aboard a ship thanks to someone in her thrall, she will allow them to fly her to a colony. There she will make them the first host for her new brood.

If a PC breaks free from her control, the Queen knows and will make them a target. Already under the Queen's subliminal control for months now, Dr. Savina will be attempting to free the Queen and get her to a colony with or without the PCs' help.

GOD SAVE THE QUEEN: Led by Mother Mishka (page 214), the Children of the Two Divines have come to liberate the captive Queen! Using a Corvus-Class salvage ship called the *Magdalene*, their raiding party of twelve plus Mishka will assault the station. They will crush the main Umbilical and do a fast and dirty dock flush with the Main External Airlock, making it impossible for the Accipiters to fire on them without damaging the station.

They have one goal only: Break the Queen out and let her make her own way to their ship, one way or another. Once she is aboard, they will take off with her. Of course, the Queen is just as likely to kill them as anyone else—though she will leave two or three of them alive to get her off station and to a world where she can breed.

Mishka will do everything in her power to slip away when things go bad. She will retreat to the *Magdalene* and escape in its Starcub shuttle (page 183 of the core rulebook). If she is severely wounded, she'll play dead and likely still escape in the end, because she's an android. The PCs may never even find out how Mishka could have escaped the station, but she does—unless the PCs manage to capture her. Then see Metapuzzle Pieces on page 193.

DO ANDROIDS DREAM OF EJECTED QUEENS: The android Pawn called Sergei (see MSS Pawn Dream Technician Android on page 304) is not too keen on the Queen. If the PCs make it clear they intend to shut down the station and stop the broadcasts, Sergei will offer to help them remove her from the board. If the PCs can get Sergei into MU/TH/UR 6000, he has the access codes to jettison the Queen's Chamber.

Jettisoning the chamber will set it adrift, cutting all power and releasing the Queen from cryosleep. Pissed off, she will break out of the tank and launch herself back towards the station. Landing hard on the exterior with a thump, she will then crawl along its surface to make her across the hull. See the Finale to the right for more on her tactics).

Of course, the other three Pawn androids will try to protect the Queen. If he can help it, Sergei will sacrifice himself to save a human life—especially Maslov—even facing a Queen in hand-to-hand combat if necessary.

Sergei knows about other things as well. See Metapuzzle Pieces on page 298 for details.

WHATEVER IT TAKES: Commandant Võ/Vũ will coordinate her commandos from her Accipiter outside Talos Station until losses make it necessary for her to lead a boarding party and combat the Children or the PCs herself.

Võ/Vũ will not let anyone steal the Queen on her watch. If the event "God Save the Queen" has occurred, she will order one of the Accipiters to plow into the *Magdalene* at a speed and angle that will shear the airlock connection loose—exposing both the station and the salvage ship to vacuum.

If the Children don't come into play and the PCs secure the station instead, Võ/Vũ will still seek to keep the Queen out of enemy control. She will directly ram the airlock, with the same effect.

After Talos starts leaking air, station gravity will fail. The Commandant and her three dropship commandos (plus the two on the outer hull if they are still alive) will then spacewalk into the station, using their Zero-G training talent to make their way through Talos and kill all the invaders—Children and PCs alike.

The station's structural integrity will be severely compromised after this. If the Queen isn't already awake and free, she is now. In one Turn, the station's Operations Section will collapse in on itself. Two Turns after the crash, the Main Airlock Level will crush itself. After three Turns, the final deck is compromised. The pressure ignites the reactor, and the station is no more.

FINALE

Whether by the hand of the Children of the Two Divines, Dr. Savina, or a botched attempt to jettison her, the Queen is free, awake, and out for blood.

If the Queen has been released inside the main corridor of the station, she's cramped and headed for one place—the Main External Airlock. If she has to, she can open the airlock on her own. If she hasn't already made it outside through an event, she's going now.

Once on the outer hull, the Queen will begin sabotaging the station from the outside in—ripping out external power and life support systems (but not communications, she wants them to call for a ship). If the Queen's Dreams broadcast has been amplified, she will act according to the event Triggered asserting her mental dominance from outside the station. If communications with the *Tamb'Itam* are reestablished, Command will order the PCs to subdue her. The Queen will hunt any extravehicular PCs on the hull.

If she has no one to control and take her away, the Queen will lie low until a ship docks. She'll scramble on to the ship's hull, where she will hide in a surface nook and curl up to wait. She may hibernate outside while a ship goes FTL to its next destination. At the appropriate time, she will make her own entrance into the ship as needed, even if it costs her another arm (she does, after all, have four).

The Queen's fate is in yours and the PCs' hands. The PCs have accomplished their objectives if they end the menace of the station and take away witnesses, prisoners, and/or evidence—i.e. Sergei, Mishka, Maslov, Weber, or hard drives from the Data Servers.

ALTERNATIVE USES

Network Stations like Talos are common on the Frontier. With a few minor adjustments to location descriptions, Talos can be adapted to a number of other scenarios. At the end of the day, it's Dealer's Choice.

ULTIMA 8 WEYLAND-YUTANI DATA COLLECTION RELAY STATION: Ultima is one of a dozen-or-so Network relay stations in the Borderline Region. Sensitive Project Life Force data, thoroughly decrypted, has been leaked to unknown agents. Luckily, it was flagged while being relayed through Ultima 8. While Weyland-Yutani thought the information was contained, they now have reason to believe that Ultima 8 was the destination all along, and that a black ops courier intends to retrieve it from someone on the station. A Colonial Marine team is dispatched to raid the facility, arrest the crew, and make a thorough search. Sounds easy—however the station has already been invaded by an unidentified commando team intent on seizing all of the decrypted W-Y data on-board the station. Who is responsible, though? And which side are they on?

GARRISON GAMMA EXPERIMENTAL LAB STATION: On a refitted CN type station assigned to Project Life Force in Garrison System Gamma, scientists are playing god. The data server room has been converted into a lab where they are experimenting with the effects of black goo. The medbay is a science lab where live vivisections are performed on creatures altered by the genetic accelerant. Because the com-relay control area is separated from the station's inhabited areas by the length of the truss, it has been repurposed as holding bays and stasis pods for xenomorphic specimens. What could go wrong? Well, everything. When the shit hits the fan, the Marines are called in as exterminators, although their briefing will inform them that the station Garrison System Gamma's standard, functioning Network relay station has gone off the grid.

MISSION 6:

OPERATION DEEP SHAFT

SONDERDATCH MINE, THE GRANDHI MOON

A cache of black death has been found buried at the bottom of an independent mine, and an accident has unleashed it on the workers there. The PCs must rescue the miners and keep this deadly bioweapon out of the wrong hands.

WHAT'S THE SITUATION, MU/TH/UR?

Both Sections of the Gunfighters Platoon are on the *Tamb'Itam*, on route to their next assignment in the Borderline Region (the PCs won't be going). The *Tamb'Itam* will already be in an area of space within a few parsecs of the GJ1230AB system when an emergency call comes in, redirecting them to the Grandhi Moon. The PCs will think they are wherever you had them going when they went to sleep. As soon as their CO has a chat with MU/TH/UR, the PCs are gathered on the hangar deck for their briefing:

"Okay Marines, MU/TH/UR received an SOS and decided to wake us up early. Weyland-Yutani leases a sulfate metal mine called Sonderdatch—it belongs to the independent colony of Grandhi Domes in the GJ1230AB system. There's been an industrial accident there. MU/TH/UR doesn't have all the details, but it looks like a work-gang setting a second shaft broke through to a gas pocket and caused some kind of collapse.

Dozens of miners are unaccounted for and believed to be trapped below. Two Marine squads were on site during the incident and have not been heard from since. There's a good chance they are trapped as well.

The hospital corps frigate Hela will rendezvous with us at the site. I'm splitting the two sections up—you will join the relief effort on Grandhi while the Tamb'Itam and the rest of us continue to the front. You won't be on your own, however—for the duration, Hela will be your home base.

Wey-You has sent a Rescue Coordinator on the Hela—a Mr. Ishigara. Work with him and his people. Get in there, get everyone out—including our boys and girls. Help them stabilize the mine. If it's a gas pocket, seal it off. If they need your help reinforcing the structural supports, do it. Save lives and neutralize the threat. Whatever it takes."

GEAR UP

The PCs should have access to a map of the mines. They will be issued Mk.35 Compression Suits and their standard weapons and equipment for the mission, as well as two SpaceSub ASSO-400, Harpoon Grappling Guns and six medkits. MU/TH/UR recommends the PCs swap out their Pulse Rifles' U-1 grenade launchers for ID23 Underslung Incinerator Units. They can take their APC (even though it won't be able to make it past Sublevel 03 in the Turns, but they don't know that).

The PCs can requisition whatever other equipment they think they may need, but as quartermaster that's up to MU/TH/UR 9000 (i.e. you) to decide if it's warranted or not. Their dropship—as well as the *Tamb'Itam*'s other three Cheyennes—will be in the area to assist them, helping to evacuate the miners to the quarantine hospital ship unless otherwise called upon.

WHAT THE HELL IS REALLY GOING ON?

Unknown to most, Sonderdatch is much more than a mining operation. Using archaeological reports and deep seismic scans, Weyland-Yutani employees working for Deep Void located what appears to be the remnants of an Engineer steatite ampule cache of Agent A0-3959X.91-15 below the surface. Deep Void didn't want the Grandhi board or Weyland-Yutani to become aware of their prize, so they worked patiently to reach to this treasure trove. Breaking through to the black goo was an accident waiting to happen.

A small team of miners in the "Basement"—miners' slang for Sonderdatch's deepest level—were using a diamond-tipped core drill to take samples from deep within the rock. When the diamond bit broke, they decided to blast their way into the cavern below—a pressure pocket filled with black death.

The black goo exploded into the mine. The pressure release caused the ore body to shift, destabilizing all of Sonderdatch. Now, the bubbling goo is welling up into the Basement, slowly flooding the area.

More than a dozen workers have been infected to varying degrees, and at least three of those have become monsters who now roam the mine with murderous intent. There are currently 37 MIA workers below—24 of which are still alive and infection free.

USCMC members of Deep Void had an eight-commando Blackguard team at Sonderdatch when the breakthrough happened. After more than half of them were killed by a "Freak" Anathema, the survivors scattered throughout the mine, waiting for reinforcements to arrive before completing their objectives—obtaining one or more intact steatite ampules, securing the premises, and covering up the incident.

Deep Void has been attempting to manipulate the situation—the Rescue Coordinator sent by the company—Mr. Ishigara—has been instructed to be on the lookout for "metal urns" while saving lives, and General Manager Mistry has made her way into the mines to secure a steatite ampule on her own.

On top of all that, the Children of the Two Divines are involved. Believing the mine to be a sacred Engineer burial ground, several of their initiates have joined the workforce at Sonderdatch, searching for evidence that their dark gods once utilized the site. Some of these "Newborn" followers have already gathered at the site of the breakthrough to be baptized in the black goo—and more Children are on their way from the nearby Grandhi Domes.

The general SOS MU/TH/UR picked up was broadcast by the mine for any ships in the vicinity, but Deep Void did not expect any USCMC units other than the Blackguard to be close enough to respond. The PCs' involvement could ruin Deep Void's plans.

Unfortunately, it appears the Border Bombers have also intercepted the SOS transmission—they are inbound to the system to ensure no one gets an intact sample.

METAPUZZLE PIECES

While Frontier War missions can be played in any order, escalating clues called Epiphanies occur in a predetermined sequence (see the Metapuzzle on page 193). Relevant metapuzzle pieces for this mission can be learned from Kirke Tanner of the Children of the Two Divines, Captain Karambit and his Blackguard Commandos, the steatite ampules, and any xenobiological samples.

WHERE THE ENEMIES ARE

Spread throughout the mines, their presence keyed to specific events, it is unlikely that all these adversaries will confront the PCs. With the right charm, some can even become steadfast allies, while others just want to be left alone.

- **Four of the Newborn Children of the Two Divines (page 326) are in the Basement level of the mine. Another ten Children are on their way to join them in the event Becoming Angels. The only Firstborn of the Children on site is Kirke Tanner (page 327). They are here to baptize themselves in the black pool in the Basement.**
- **Blackguard Captain Karambit (page 329) is in the Trojan Medtech event, and the two commandos with him are in the event Union Dispute. The final four commandos will enter the mine to back him up in the event No Witnesses. Their goal—secure steatite ampule and the cache of black goo inside, and eliminate all witnesses.**
- **A mob of six disgruntled miners and their union boss Sokolov wander the tunnels, ready to take on any soldiers in the event Union Dispute.**
- **Six Stage I "Afflicted" Anathemas—carriers of the infection—are secreted throughout Sonderdatch. Two are at the Assembly Point, with four more on the Roadway waiting to be evacuated.**
- **Two Stage II "Febrile" Anathemas are present, a miner named Hill in the Dormitories and General Manager Mistry in the event Opportunist.**
- **Three rabid Stage III "Freak" Anathemas lurk in the mines. One Freak rages in the event Dismembers Only. Another—a former Newborn—lurks in the black pool in the Basement, and a final Freak wanders the mines in the event Caveman.**
- **There are three Stage IV "Terminal" Anathemas about to go critical. One is in the Access Tunnels, and two in the Turns.**

AIRLESS, LOW-G MOON

Sonderdatch Mine is located on the airless, low-gravity moon of Grandhi (page 154). While inside the mines it is –10°C, surface temperatures here can drop to –120°C. Canyons and craters cover the surrounding landscape. Grandhi Domes Freeport—where the ore is routinely transported to—is some 35 kilometers away on stable bedrock.

GRAVITY: Inside Sonderdatch's cozy surface complex, standard gravity is achieved through gravity plates laid out under the floors. Outside on the surface and within the mine itself, gravity is significantly lower. Characters will initially have some trouble moving around and receive a –2 modifier to all AGILITY and CLOSE COMBAT rolls. Any character with the Zero-G Training talent can ignore these modifiers. Jumping distance is doubled and falling damage on the moon is halved.

AIR: The surface installations and lower levels of the mine are equipped with an artificial atmosphere. Anyone in an area without an artificially generated atmosphere will begin to suffocate (page 110 of the core rulebook).

INSERTION

With their section's second dropship coming in on their heels, the PCs can see that the civilian Conestoga Class UAS Hela is in orbit. Two red and white medical UD-4B Cheyenne rescue dropships are touching down near the mine.

The PCs' dropship puts down next to them and they are immediately stampeded by 20 miners in Mk.50 Compression Suits, wanting to escape on the PCs' dropship. If the PCs are going to get off before the miners push their way on, some order is going to have to be established. A successful **COMMAND** or **MANIPULATION** roll can quiet things down—as can some weapons fire aimed over the heads of the crowd.

ON SITE REPORT: As the dropships begin loading the wounded, Rescue Coordinator Ishigara (page 318) greets the PCs. He tells them they have 62 wounded topside. Wounds range from broken bones to crushed limbs to multiple lacerations. There are 37 miners and eight Marines trapped inside. If the PCs are friendly to him, Ishigara will reveal some info about his orders.

If the PCs want to enter the mine immediately, Ishigara has a MX11A1 Hovertread at his disposal. He will offer the PCs use of it to descend into the mine. Its weapon systems are still intact, but it has no ammo or power packs for them.

If they want it armed, the PCs will have to improvise—the turret takes standard Smartgun ammo and three powerpacks for the energy weapons can be installed with a successful **HEAVY MACHINERY** roll. The correct power packs are stored at the Machine Bay but a pack can be removed from any vehicle (Power Supply 7) and jury-rigged for the Hovertread with a second successful **HEAVY MACHINERY** roll.

KEN ISHIGARA

RESCUE COORDINATOR

A former Colonial Coast Guardsman, Ken is a Weyland-Yutani rescue specialist who is here to save lives. He will admit to the PCs that his bosses told him to bring back any metal urns found on site—almost like these objects were more important to them than human lives. He is so disgusted with Weyland-Yutani's behavior of late that he intends to resign after this mission. Ishigara and his group of medtechs will save thirteen miners without the PCs' help.

STRENGTH 4, AGILITY 4, WITS 3, EMPATHY 3

HEALTH: 4

SKILLS: Heavy Machinery 2, Stamina 2, Piloting 2, Observation 3, Medical Aid 3

TALENTS: The Long Haul, Zero-G Training

GEAR: MX11A1 Hovertread vehicle, SpaceSub ASSO-400 Harpoon Grappling Gun, Mk.35 Compression Suit, flashlight, medkit, M314 Motion Tracker, climbing rope.

GOING BELOW

Sonderdatch Mine poses some unique problems for PCs attempting to gain access to its lower levels. Motion trackers will not detect signals through hard rock. Grenades and other explosives run the danger of triggering a roof collapse.

Treat the walls and ceilings as having an Armor Rating of 4 against explosions. If an explosion penetrates the walls, it may trigger the event Dead Zone Cave-In.

There are limited routes in and out of the mine. Standard entry routes into the mine include the Descending Roadway and the Main Shaft. More creative alternatives include the Ventilation Shaft and blowing holes in the floor (and risking the aforementioned cave-in). Tremors occur periodically and can trigger a tunnel collapse that seals off the route the PCs took into the mine. If so, they will need to find an alternate route out.

Mr. Ishigara leads a group of six medtechs into the mine with the PCs, but he will immediately split up and take a different route in order to maximize search efforts. As they prepare to go underground, the *Tamb'Itam* signals it is leaving the system.

A NOTE FROM MU/TH/UR: While the PCs don't have the Tamb'Itam to fall back to, they do have two dropships nearby, the Hospital ship, and Ishigara's rescue team for support. They have backup—they are not alone. If they need help, they should feel free to call for it. ■

MINERS

These are the everyday roughnecks that work at Sonderdatch. Use these statistics whenever the PCs encounter a typical mine worker.

STRENGTH 5, AGILITY 3, WITS 2, EMPATHY 3

HEALTH: 5

SKILLS: Close Combat 2, Heavy Machinery 4, Piloting 3, Observation 1

TALENT: Starship Mechanic

GEAR: Mk.50 Compression Suit, flashlight, tool kit, cutting torch, six doses of Never-sleep, pack of Balaji Imperials.

SONDERDATCH MINE

Known in the industry as a hard-rock mine, this installation extracts zinc and lead from beneath the moon's surface. Other mines of this type might extract gold, silver, tin, nickel, copper or even diamonds. The ancient sulfide deposits on this planet are mined and refined, and the finished zinc and lead pellets are then shipped back from the Domes to hungry factories in the Crestus and Micor Sectors.

Some 250 men and women work at Sonderdatch, mostly roughnecks, but some technicians, service crews and managers too. Many miners live on site. The precious ore sits in a column and was initially mined using open cast methods. Today, the lower reaches are mined from a 600 meter shaft dug next to the ore body. Underground roadways, or sublevels, stretch out along one side of the ore mass, and from these access tunnels have been dug to meet the ore face.

While Sublevels 01 to 04 are already tapped out—Sublevels 05 and 06 are producing well. There, miners and cutting machines excavate a vast artificial cave into the ore, using bucket loaders to dump ore onto conveyor belts. The caves—called stopes in mining lingo—are backfilled to prevent collapse, and that level is then abandoned. The tunnels are busy places, full of noise and dangerous machinery in cramped spaces—there are immense cutters, powerful bucket loaders and conveyor belts feeding ore along the sublevels and into the ore chute.

The Main Shaft runs two steel cables side-by-side, but separated by an iron safety grille. One cable hauls miners and their equipment up and down in what they call "the Cage," the other hauls a heavy steel skip bin which brings ore up from the Ore Bin (at the base of the shaft) to be refined. The descending roadway is used to drive cutting machines and loaders in and out of the mine as well as transport heavy equipment, such as generators, pumps, hydraulic props, metal sheeting and other items that are too big to fit inside the cage.

ARTIFICIAL ATMOSPHERE: Sublevels 05 and 06 are cold (–10 degrees Celsius), but they do have an artificial atmosphere with breathable (though stale) air. A combination of Air Scrubbers, Ventilation Blowers, plastic strip curtains and forced air returns at entrances to Sublevels 05 and 06 keeps most of the air from leaking out to the surface. These curtains can be pushed through easily by vehicles and personnel alike, preventing lengthy wait times between shipments in and out. While loss of atmosphere is a concern, this method is cheaper than an airlock system.

The air down here is fully breathable. While all miners wear Mk.50 Compression Suits, they often forgo helmets when working. The air begins to thin on Sublevel 04 (an additional –2 to all **STAMINA** rolls) and is unbreathable above that (page 110 of the core rulebook).

THE AFFLICTED

The lower levels are a mess, and they are getting messier. There were hundreds of steatite ampules containing Agent A0-3959X.91-15 stored in the pocket cavern, and many of them were damaged when the drilling crew broke through. The mine is steadily filling with the black goo at a rate of half a meter per Turn. Anyone coming in direct contact with the black goo without protective gear like a Compression or HAZMAT Suit must make a Sickness roll against Virulence 10. Failure means they become an Anathema (page 179).

LOCATIONS

THE PIT: This large open cast mine is ringed with a series of descending roadways. It was originally used by the company to extract the very top of the ore body. As this became impractical, it was abandoned, and the currently used mining shaft was sunk. The Pit has no dome.

OLD STOREHOUSE: This was the operations block for the open cast mining operation. It still stands, but is in some disrepair. Part of it has been used to store obsolete equipment and unwanted spares and materials.

MINE CONTROL: A set of offices, a meeting room, an operations planning room, and a comm station used to contact the outside world. The android Gibson (below) can be found here, coordinating rescue efforts. General Manager Mistry (page 327) is supposed to be here, but she is currently missing below (see the Opportunist event). Gibson will inform the PCs that he was instructed by the manager to tell them that "the Colonial Marines will not be needed and their presence is unwelcome here." Then he will pause and say, "Now that that's out of the way, how can I be of service?" Gibson is willing to go with the PCs as needed.

Gibson will show the PCs the lower-level surveillance camera feeds. Each section looks hastily abandoned with rubble and equipment scattered about. The crashed vehicles on the Turns can be seen on one feed. In one of the Access Tunnels, a helmeted miner can be seen pacing back and forth with an axe in hand. Feeds for Sublevels 05 and 06 are dead. Gibson believes there are several miners trapped in the Basement—where the accident occurred. Feel free to add whatever you wish to any other location.

ANDROID MINE CONTROLLER GIBSON

A Hyperdyne Systems 340G model, Gibson works for Grandhi Domes, not Weyland-Yutani. He has been programmed to care about his people—although his ethical subroutine will allow him to make the choice to sacrifice the few to save the many. While he has a suspicious demeanor, he will aid the PCs and sacrifice himself to help others.

STRENGTH 7, AGILITY 4, WITS 7, EMPATHY 3

HEALTH: 7

SKILLS: Heavy Machinery 1, Stamina 4, Comtech 4, Observation 3

TALENT: Analysis

GEAR: System Diagnostic Device, hand radio.

DORMITORIES: These are cramped, cage-style dormitory accommodations for the miners and technicians. There are shower blocks, a dining room, lounge, kitchen and games room. The place appears to be deserted. Any jerk going through the personal effects left behind can find D6x100 W-Y dollars, D6 doses of X-stims, and D6 magazines for every Turn spent searching. Jerk.

While the area is generally empty, a single terrified miner named Hill is hiding in one of the showers. Hill's eyes are bloodshot and her skin is white and clammy. She is a Stage II "Febrile" Anathema. She will use her Enthralling Gaze ability to beguile a PC.

MACHINE BAY: A garage and repair workshop for all of the mining equipment, pumps, jacks, generators, trains, wagons and power loaders that get used in the mine. Any repair work done here gives a +3 bonus to **HEAVY MACHINERY** rolls. There are extra vehicle power packs (Power Supply 8) and emergency generators stored here. If these are used, consult the Power Supply chart as needed (page 35 of the core rulebook).

TUNNEL ENTRANCE: The open tunnel entrance that allows vehicles into the mine via the "descent."

AIR SCRUBBER PUMPHOUSE: This building pumps and circulates recycled air to Sublevels 05 and 06, replacing the atmosphere that leaks out and dissipates on Sublevel 04. The Scrubber includes an automated backup generator with a Power Supply of 12. This area allows access to an air shaft that leads to all levels below—but the Ventilation Blower fan must be turned off first.

MINEHEAD: The wheelhouse that operates the twin cables that reach down the Main Shaft is located here. Communications between the operators and the miners below are constant. The cable machinery is installed above the wheelhouse. The surface Minehead includes a medbay, an office and a locker room, where miners suit up for their work below ground.

MAIN SHAFT, CAGE, AND SKIP: The Main Shaft is under the Minehead. The Cage can take ten people at a time down the Main Shaft into the mine, stopping at Sublevels 01, 04, 05, and finally 06, where it opens at the Assembly Point. Next to the cage in the Main Shaft is the ore skip, a vertical rail car which lifts ore from below and dumps it onto a conveyor belt headed through the service building and out to the refinery.

SERVICE BUILDING: This contains the generator and electrical switching systems for the entire mine, as well as offices and a workshop. Ore passes through the generator hall on a suspended conveyor belt on its way from the top of the shaft to the refinery.

RAISED CONVEYOR: This conveyor belt ferries ore brought up the Main Shaft to the refinery. Vehicles and personnel can pass beneath it.

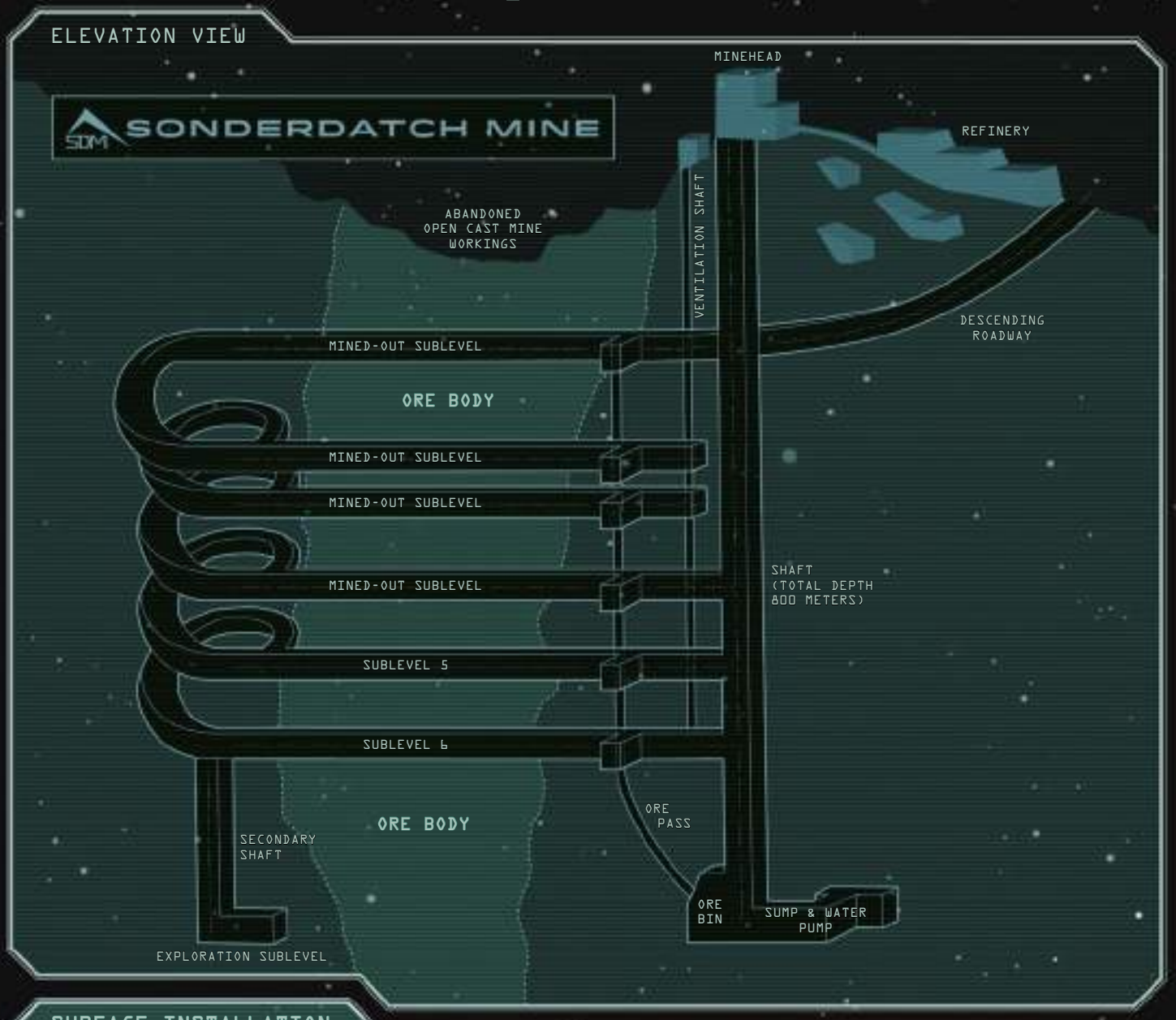
REFINERY: A semi-autonomous ore refinery, passing ore from one processing hall to the next, crushing, grinding, floating, distilling and drying the ore and disposing of the rock waste (the "tailings"). Trucks normally ferry the refined ore away (via the roadway) to the distant landing field for collection. Currently, however, the refinery is still.

If the event Dismembers Only is either in progress or over with, four terrified survivors of the massacre are huddled here. They describe one of their friends, Scott, becoming a monster and killing everyone at Mori Mori. If the event hasn't happened yet, the Refinery is instead eerily quiet.

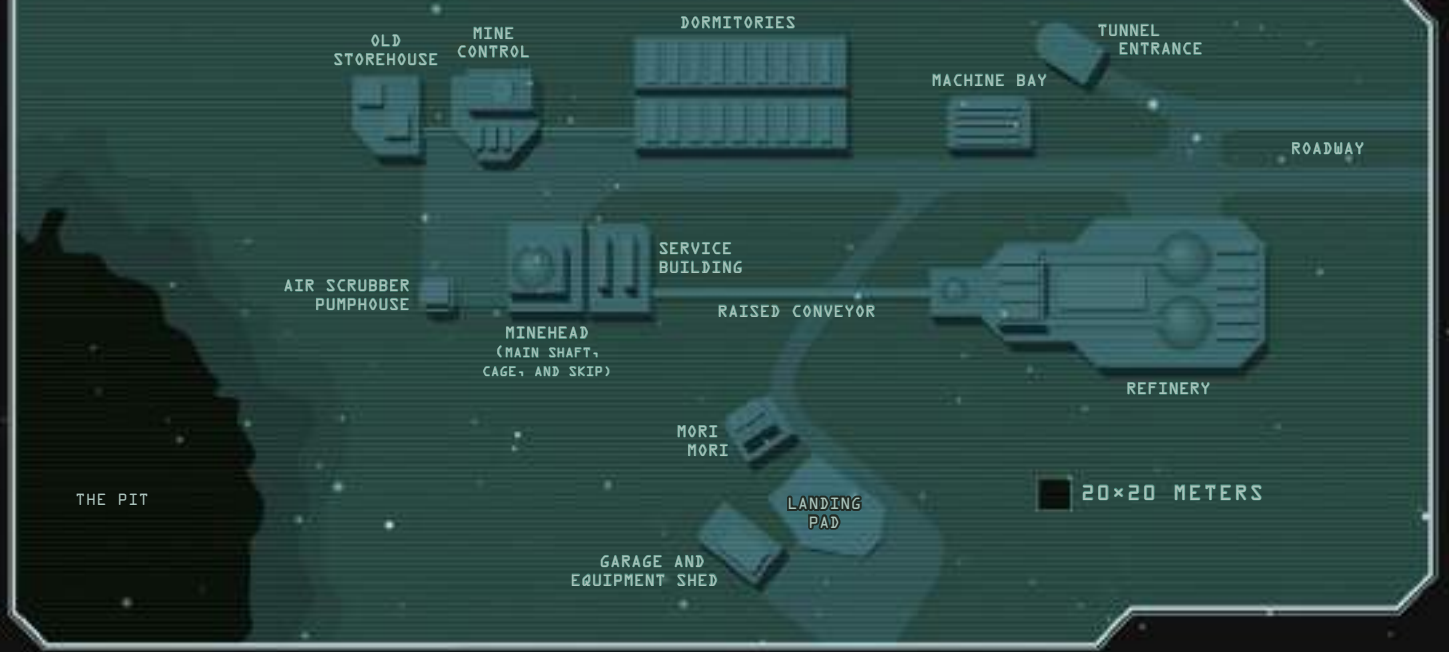
MORI MORI: A restaurant and bar for union members only, the Mori Mori is the place miners, supervisors and managers who pay their union dues come to relax when off-shift. Bad behavior is not tolerated—the bartender Yansick has a stun baton under the bar, ready to be used on anyone who causes trouble. There are dozens of people here, drinking. If anyone is asked about what happened down below, many a miner just downs their drink in one long chug and orders another. Union worker Phelps however, will tell the PCs that he thinks there was a collapse in the basement and everyone just overreacted.

Things here will play out differently during the event Dismembers Only.

ELEVATION VIEW

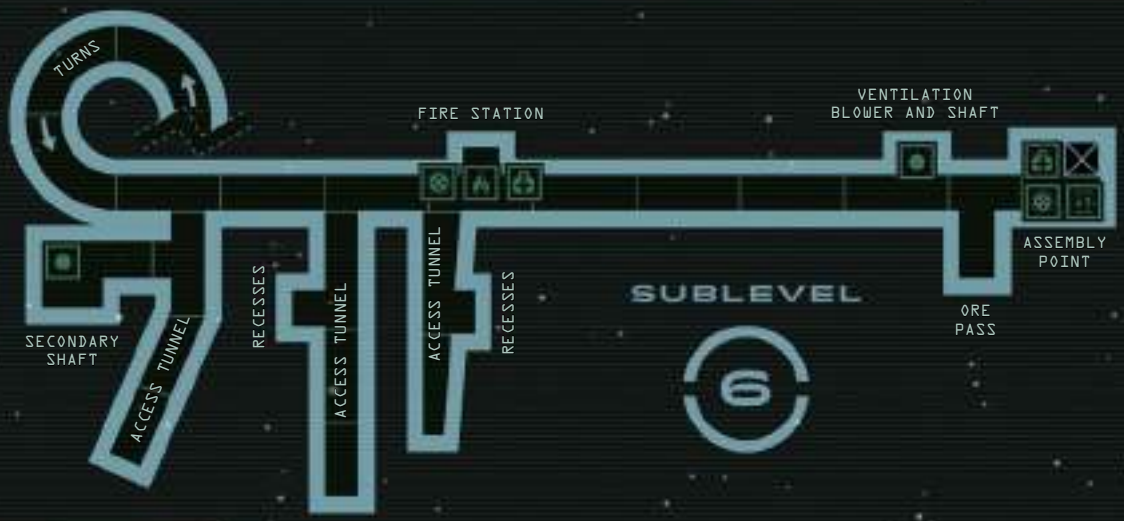


SURFACE INSTALLATION



SUBLEVEL 5

SUBLEVEL 6



THE BASEMENT

MAP LEGEND

LANDING PAD: This irregular shaped pad was built to accommodate shuttles and cargo sleds that carry refined ore to orbiting freighters. Equipment stored here offers a +3 modifier to **HEAVY MACHINERY** rolls when repairing dropships and G Class or smaller starships. The pad is empty.

GARAGE AND EQUIPMENT SHED: Eight Daihotai tractors are stored here along with the general equipment the mine complex needs to function. If the PCs attempt to start the engines of any of these tractors, they will discover that the starters have been ripped out of each one (this was done by Captain Karambit and his Blackguard before they descended into the mine to prevent anyone contaminated from leaving via any means other than the hospital ship. There are also six functioning P-5000 Power Loaders in the shed (page 128 of the core rulebook).

ROADWAY: The road terminates just beyond the map, but points directly towards the Grandhi Domes settlement. Nearly 200 miners are assembled here in Mk.50 Compression Suits, waiting for their turn to be taken away via rescue dropship.

TURNS: The roadway tunnel loops around and spirals deeper into the mine to allow vehicle access to the lower levels.

Two Daihotai tractors are mashed together in a tangled wreck here at Sublevel 01, both on fire. The PCs can clear the road using heavy weapons, breaching charges, power loaders, or other means—but there are four workers miners trapped within the wreckage.

The PCs can get them out using a cutting torch and a Turn of work, or in a single Round with a power loader. If asked, the workers will say there are P-5000s in the Garage and Equipment Shed and stored in the Recesses below.

When the PCs free them, none of the miners feels very well. They all wear sealed Mk.50 Compression Suits. Led by a supervisor called Mädsen, these miners were originally in the lower levels with their helmets off during the accident. Three are infected Anathemas and will start convulsing at a dramatically appropriate time.

Two of them will quickly mutate to Stage IV "Terminal" and disintegrate in their suits. Another will transform into a violent Stage III "Freak" Anathema. The Freak will attack everyone, attempting to smash their helmets open. The fourth—Supervisor Mädsen—is somehow not infected. Further down the Turns at Sublevel 03, there is a cave-in that drops to Sublevel 06—no vehicle other than Ishigara's Hovertread can make it past this point. Of course, if the PCs come up with an ingenious way to build a bridge, let them do it.

FIRE STATION: Fire is always a hazard, so these recesses contain extinguishers, fire suits, hydraulic rams, fire axes, and medkits. There is also an intercom to the Minehead.

ACCESS TUNNELS: These tunnels allow miners and their cutting machines to extract the ore directly, leaving behind open caverns the miners call stopes. The slumped form of a mutating male miner sits in one of the tunnels. His corpse is bleeding at the neck, his head lolled back at a disturbing angle. He committed suicide by attempting to sever his own head with a nearby power saw. His dead eyes are clouded over. Despite being dead, black spidery veins are spreading across his face. If the PCs don't torch it, the body will mutate into a Stage IV "Terminal" Anathema and disintegrate when dramatically appropriate.

VENTILATION BLOWER AND SHAFT: This industrial turbine blower forces air down a ventilation shaft from the surface Air Scrubbers. Rungs on the interior of the vent allow for emergency evacuation should the descending roadway be blocked. Any miner below will know this information. It is extremely loud and windy in here while the blower is running. The main fan must be shut down for the PCs to exit the blower and enter the Air Scrubbers on the surface.

ORE PASS: The ore pass is a shaft connecting each sublevel. Ore is deposited here by a conveyor belt and moved to the Ore Bin. Access to the Ore Pass is strictly forbidden while the mine is in operation, but when it is shut down a **MOBILITY** roll would still be needed to make the climb.

ASSEMBLY POINTS (SUBLEVEL 05 AND SUBLEVEL 06): Each assembly point is a large area by the Main Shaft where roughnecks and machinery can be loaded onto or unloaded off the cage. There are identical Assembly Points on Sublevel 05 and 06—each with an intercom and three medkits.

On Sublevel 05, the Assembly Point is clear. Sublevel 06 is another story. Eight workers led by a woman named Thompson are huddled on 06, trapped and waiting desperately for the cage. They say someone lost his shit and is murdering people on this level. Thompson got a look at his eyes—she says they were black and soulless, like a shark's eyes. They are armed with Rexim mining lasers (treat as Rexim EVA Pistols with no Bonus) and have managed to elude the maniac thus far (this could be a lead-in to the event Caveman).

RECESSES: These cutouts allow roughnecks to step out of the access tunnel to avoid oncoming bucket loaders or other machinery, or for the storage of batteries, generators, drills or hydraulic props when not in use. PCs searching these recesses will find a total of two P-5000 Powered Work Loaders, four vehicle power packs, two cutting torches and three Watatsumi DV-303 Bolt Guns (page 119 of the core rulebook), and three blasting charges (treat as Armat Type 4 Assault Breaching Charges).

SECONDARY SHAFT: This 20-meter-deep secondary shaft has been sunk recently and is ready for when work begins on the Basement below. It is fitted with a small winch and cradle to lower crews down, as well as their drills. An aluminum ladder is also fitted to the side of the shaft as a backup. Muffled voices echo from below. It almost sounds like chanting. At the bottom of the shaft in the Basement is a pile of three Mk.50 Compression Suits piled in the corner.

"THE BASEMENT": This is where the accident occurred. Technically called the Exploration Sublevel, this short tunnel was used to probe the rock and mark the location of the ore body. Workers blasted through the floor, inadvertently releasing Agent A0-3959X.91-15 into the mine.

The walls here are coated with a dried layer of goo left behind by the blasting charge that broke through the rock. At the end of the tunnel is a growing pool of black sludge, bubbling out of a crack in the floor. The area closest to the Secondary Shaft is dry, but the floor of the Basement slopes downward. The tar pool begins about 20 meters from the shaft and gradually drops away to a depth of three meters.

Several surviving steatite ampules can be found amongst the rubble and broken urns, scattered across the bottom of the sludge pool. The ragged edges of one or two shattered ampules jut out of the tar near the shallow edge of the pool. As soon as the PCs arrive here, the tar level will begin to rise at a rate of one meter per Turn. Soon the black goo will fill the Basement and will be bubbling up into Sublevel 06.

Two "Newborn" members of Children of the Two Divines (next page) stand quietly near the shallow edge of the tar pool. A third member—the group's "Queen"—is standing waist deep in the sludge. She wears a Mk.50 Compression Suit with no helmet (and thus is not affected by Agent A0-3959X.91-15 unless it hits her face). The Queen is conducting a ceremony to baptize the Children, one-by-one. A fourth member of the Children is mostly submerged in the tar-like pool. As the PCs enter, the Queen proclaims, "You will become a Destroying Angel!" as she plunges him under the black goo.

If any threats are made to the Children, the two Newborn will shield their Queen with their bodies. At a dramatically appropriate time, bubbles will appear in the goo pool. The fourth Newborn will erupt from the Stygian depths, in mid-transformation into a Stage III "Freak" Anathema. In agony, he won't be able to attack for two Rounds.

ORE BIN: This large rock-cut chamber holds zinc ore ready for transport to the surface. It is fed continually by the Ore Pass above. An automated dispenser fills a vertical railcar called the skip, which hauls the ore up the Main Shaft. Access to the Ore Bin and dispenser is possible from the skip. A head belonging to the miner's body floating in the Sump lies on the floor here. The first PC to enter the room will trip over the head (+1 **STRESS LEVEL** when they realize what they stumbled over).

SUMP: Water (often mixed with mud and oil) leaking down through the sublevels and the main shaft, is collected in a large sump. A short tunnel from the main shaft on this "Basement" level, allows technicians to service a water pump that automatically sends the contents of the sump up a pipe to the surface. The pump has stopped working, and the sump is slowly overflowing into the main shaft. A headless human body—formerly a miner named Ward—floats in the dirty water.

DESCENDING ROAD: This low tunnel was cut in order to get wheeled vehicles and cargo into the mine. It connects to the Turns and can be used to evacuate miners on foot.

THE "NEWBORN" CHILDREN

Ordinary people who have given themselves over to the Children of the Two Divines, each Newborn is hopped up on X-Stims and adrenaline. They are completely on edge (see the Panic rules in the core rulebook for examples if you want to push them over the top). Their goal is to drink the black goo and be reborn as "angels," which turns them into Anathemas.

STRENGTH 2, AGILITY 2, WITS 2, EMPATHY 2

HEALTH: 2

SKILLS: Close Combat 1, Ranged Combat 1, Observation 2, Manipulation 2

TALENT: Hothead

GEAR: Mk.50 Compression Suit, Rexim EVA Pistol, combat knife, Armat Type 4 Breaching Charge, four grenades.

EVENTS

Here are some events that you can spring on the players. The events don't all need to occur, and they don't need to occur in the order listed. Instead, see the events as an arsenal of drama for you to use as you see fit.

DEAD ZONE CAVE-IN: After a severe tremor, the artificial environment leaks out of this unstable area. The ceiling in this section will collapse and add +1 **STRESS LEVEL** to anyone present. A **MOBILITY** roll is required to avoid being hit with the debris. Failure results in an attack rolled with ten Base Dice, base Damage 1. After the dust settles, there are two possible results of this cave-in (Dealer's Choice). This allows you to use this event more than once—it is an unstable mine, after all.

The route the PCs took to get here could be completely cut off behind them, or the floor could collapse as well—creating a deep chasm filled with rubble. If that happens, another **MOBILITY** roll is required to work around the crumbling edge safely, with failure resulting in a fall of 10 meters. The lower gravity reduces falling damage to half of normal, and is further mitigated by armor and a **MOBILITY** roll (page 108 of the core rulebook).

Should you want, this collapse can provide a way to reach the levels below, but too much activity here will cause a second cave in that seals the chasm.

DISMEMBERS ONLY: Both Ishigara and the PCs will all get an alert signal on their comms—there is trouble at the Mori Mori bar. A Stage III "Freak" Anathema (page 180) is tearing eight miners to shreds, and a dozen others are attempting to flee.

If the PCs go there, the walls and equipment are slick with blood, with dismembered body parts strewn across the floor and tables. Scott—the now **PASSIVE** Stage III "Freak" Anathema responsible for the carnage—sits on the bar, intent on picking the bones of a roughneck clean. If he notices the PCs, he will stare at them and continue to gnaw on a bone until they make the first move.

THE OPPORTUNIST: General Manager Mistry (below) has turned thief and is trying to get out with a big package—a steatite ampule. She doesn't know what it is, nor does she know she is already a Stage II "Febrile" Anathema. All she knows is that there is big money and a promotion involved if she gets it to the surface. If Mistry runs into the Blackguard, they will kill her and take the urn—if she doesn't transform into a Stage III "Freak" Anathema first.

GENERAL MANAGER CASSANDRA MISTRY

FEBRILE ANATHEMA

Mistry is tired of the Frontier. She took a prestigious general manager job thinking she was going to live a life of luxury—instead, she ended up stuck in the same shithole as the other miners. Sure, she has to do less physically demanding work and gets paid more, but that just isn't enough. Mistry received orders from someone placed high in the Weyland-Yutani Office of Biological Development, instructing her to acquire one of the urns and get out of the mine. She did as she was told—she just got herself infected in the process (see the event The Opportunist).

STRENGTH 3, AGILITY 2, WITS 4, EMPATHY 5

HEALTH: 3

SKILLS: Ranged Combat 1, Comtech 4, Command 3, Manipulation 4

TALENT: Personal Safety

GEAR: Mk.50 Compression Suit, P-DAT, E-Series Wristwatch.

MINE HAND KIRKE TANNER

A dedicated miner, Kirke is also secretly a Firstborn—one of the elite of the Children of the Two Divines. Like so many other Children who took jobs at the mine, she has been digging here for over a year in hopes of finding the bounty of the dark gods. As a Firstborn, Kirke is privy to information on Deep Void and its motives. She is a fanatic who will sacrifice her life for the Children, knowing she will ascend to be one with the destroying angels.

STRENGTH 5, AGILITY 4, WITS 3, EMPATHY 2

HEALTH: 5

SKILLS: Close Combat 3, Heavy Machinery 5, Stamina 1, Mobility 3

TALENT: Watchful

GEAR: Mk.50 Compression Suit, flashlight, tool kit, two Armat Type 4 Assault Breaching Charges, razor blade, P-DAT with digital copy of *Space Beast*.

TAG ALONG: As the PCs descend into the mine, they meet a miner named Kirke Tanner (previous page). Secretly a Firstborn of the Children of the Two Divines, Tanner seems dazed and confused. She will tell the PCs she needs to get to the lower levels to help a friend, and asks them to escort her there. If they decline, Tanner will simply follow the PCs from a distance and, at some point, run into them again. She will maintain her charade of tag along unless the PCs forcibly attempt to get her out of the mine. She is carrying a razor that she will put to a Marine's neck to get what she wants—to make it to the Basement and be transformed into an "angel."

SURVIVORS: Miners Gregor and Tai are relieved to see the PCs. They have been trapped in the mine for hours. Both are extremely pale, covered in a sheen of sweat, and stumbling around. They are low on oxygen.

If asked, Tai is adamant that he was not exposed to anything. Gregor will be reluctant to answer (he was exposed to black tar bubbling out of the crack in the Basement). Gregor is a Stage I "Afflicted" Anathema, but he won't progress to Stage II for several hours.

Tai is not infected, but will show signs of claustrophobia, complaining that everything is pressing in on him. Tai will panic at a dramatically appropriate time and attempt to take his helmet off, even if in a place with no atmosphere.

THE TROJAN MEDTECH: Two miners trapped under a piece of wreckage are crying out in pain. A medtech from Ishigara's rescue team slips past the situation, ignoring them. This "rescuer" is actually Captain Karambit (right), one of the survivors of the Blackguard commandos who entered the mine and were ripped apart by a Freak before the PCs arrived. There are two other surviving commandos elsewhere in the mine (see the event, Union Dispute for their disposition). In Karambit's "medical bag" is an NSG23 Assault Rifle with the stock removed. If cornered, he will fire.

CAVEMAN: A **PASSIVE** Stage III "Freak" Anathema roams the corridors, looking for victims. It was once a man named Giler—one of the miners who accidentally released the black goo. The Freak is carrying the thigh bone of another miner, and will use it as a club (**STRESS LEVEL** +1). If it sees the PCs, it will shriek and rush towards them. If the PCs are losing, it will begin to scream and disintegrate (see Stage IV Anathemas on page 181), filling the tunnels with black death.

UNION DISPUTE: An angry mob of six miners armed with mining lasers attacks the marines, calling them "Wey-You" goons (treat the mining lasers as Rexim EVA pistols with no bonus). They are led by their union boss, Sokolov (right). Apparently, two soldiers wearing black—members of the Blackguard—already came through here and killed several miners, so the workers think the PCs are with them. The PCs can try to talk them down if they'd like. If the PCs can convince Sokolov they are here to help, he will tell his people to stand down. If the PCs continue in the direction the miners came from, in the next section of the mine they will find the pulse round-riddled corpses of seven dead miners sprawled across the floor. Two advance scout Blackguard commandos are responsible. They can be encountered anywhere up ahead.

BECOMING ANGELS: A WY-37B Cargo Lifter Transport Sled (page 146 of the core rulebook) from the Grandhi Domes descends upon the site, landing right inside the Open Cast Mine. The lifter carries ten "Newborn" (page 326) Children of the Two Divines. Wearing Mk.50 Compression Suits, they are ready to storm their way to Sublevel 05.

Using explosives to enter any sealed off or collapsed section in their path, the Children make their way to the black goo pool located in the Basement. Once they make it past Sublevel 04, they will begin frantically searching for the black goo. When they find it, they will strip their clothes off and wade into the black pool. If the PCs haven't been to the black pool in the Basement yet, see the description there for a Children ceremony already in progress.

If the Ceremony has already been disrupted, the "Newborn" will simply throw themselves into the pool, suffering horrible effects and becoming Anathemas.

UNION BOSS STEFAN SOKOLOV

Originally from the UPP, Sokolov tried to defect to the UA—settling on Grandhi only after the Americans rejected his application for asylum. He is wary of Americans but wants nothing to do with the Children of the Two Divines.

STRENGTH 4, AGILITY 4, WITS 2, EMPATHY 4

HEALTH: 4

SKILLS: Close Combat 2, Heavy Machinery 3, Stamina 4, Mobility 3

TALENT: Resilient

GEAR: Watatsumi DV-303 Bolt Gun, Mk.50 Compression Suit, flashlight, tool kit, can of Aspen beer in his worn utility belt.

THE BLACKGUARD: KARAMBIT'S COMMANDOS

These AW Soldiers are ruthless killers. They are loyal to Karambit and will kill civilians on his order without hesitation. For more on AW Soldiers, see page 164.

STRENGTH 6, AGILITY 3, WITS 3, EMPATHY 2

HEALTH: 6

SKILLS: Close Combat 4, Ranged Combat 5, Mobility 3

TALENT: Menacing

GEAR: Black Mk.35 Compression Suit, NGS23 Assault Rifle with I23 Flame Unit, combat knife, Armat Type 4 Assault Breaching Charge, flashlight, aerosol spray of Absolute Zero with four doses.

BLACKGUARD CAPTAIN GABRIEL A.W. KARAMBIT

One of General Vaughn's top soldiers, Captain Karambit is respected by his fellow commandos. He believes you should never order someone to do something you wouldn't do yourself. As such, he disguised himself as a medtech in order to infiltrate the mine ahead of his unit and secure a steatite ampule for Deep Void. If questioned, Karambit and/or his commandos will say they were ordered by the UAAC to bring back the urns.

STRENGTH 6, AGILITY 4, WITS 3, EMPATHY 2

HEALTH: 6

SKILLS: Close Combat 5, Mobility 3, Ranged Combat 4, Command 2

TALENTS: Field Commander, Menacing

GEAR: Mk.50 Compression Suit, NGS23 Assault Rifle with I23 Flame Unit, six combat knives, four grenades, four Armat Type 4 Assault Breaching Charges, aerosol spray of Absolute Zero with two doses.

ABSOLUTE ZERO AEROSOL

This freezing sterilization aerosol spray developed by Dr. Babak is experimental. The spray negates immediate exposure to the Anathema infection—but only if the infection is the result of a bite wound or tactile contact. If the pathogen is inhaled or imbibed, the spray is useless. Absolute Zero must be applied directly to the affected area within one round of exposure. While effective, the aerosol causes extreme frostbite and blackening of the sprayed area. The recipient suffers one point of damage and gains STRESS LEVEL +1—but they have successfully avoided infection without need for a sickness roll.

REINFORCEMENTS: If the PCs aren't on the surface when this event plays out, they'll hear about it on their comm channels and encounter the Blackguard in the mines below. An unregistered Cheyenne medical dropship arrives—allegedly part of the relief effort. As the ship approaches, a successful **OBSERVATION** roll reveals it to be a black UD-4C Gunship.

The PCs have a few Rounds to act in whatever way they see fit before it arrives. The gunship briefly hovers over the mine before a four-man team wearing black Mk.35 Pressure Suits descends to the Tunnel Entrance or the Minehead.

These are the Blackguard commando reinforcements that Captain Karambit called for—here to both recover any on site artifacts and eliminate all witnesses. The four Blackguard commandos will make their way to the Basement to secure intact steatite ampules. Their captain and any remnants of his first team are already in the mines (see the Medtech event). So long as their suits remain intact, the team will attempt to dive into the sludge and recover any unbroken urns they can find.

Once they get their prize, the Blackguard will begin placing Armat 4 Breaching Charges on load bearing supports with the intent of sealing off the Basement.

FINALE

Sonderdatch is collapsing! The tunnels shake as the Minehead explodes, exposing the Main Shaft to vacuum (see the effects of vacuum and explosive decompression on page 107 of the core rulebook). Before everything is blown out onto the surface, however, another explosion collapses the upper levels of the mine, sealing it and trapping everyone within.

Possible escape routes include climbing the Ore Pass to the Roadway on Sublevel 01, sneaking out the Ventilation Blower or blasting a path through the collapsed rubble. Along the way, the PCs will encounter isolated survivors who will want to come with them.

Unless the PCs are in communication with the surface, they will be unaware of the cause of this disaster. The Border Bombers (page 216) have struck, firing explosive energy bursts at the mine to collapse it and seal its secrets within.

AFTERMATH: Getting to the surface, the PCs will notice all is quiet—the Sonderdatch surface facility is now nothing but scorched and crumbling ruins. the hospital ship is gone, and the Grandhi Domes have been destroyed—cracked open and quickly filling with a black haze. Anyone left alive inside those domes is mutating into Stage III "Freaks." The colony is a total loss. The hospital ship and everyone aboard it will be officially listed as missing in action. The only survivors will be the PCs and those they manage to get out of the mine.

Eventually, the *Tamb'Itam* returns to the system to retrieve the PCs. Analysis of the carnage will determine the colony was destroyed by "forces unknown." Upon returning to the ship, their CO gives the order to nuke the mine and the former colony. If they made it to the surface and have rescued at least six miners, they will be recognized as heroes by Secretary of Defense De La Cruz and the rest of UAAC. The PCs will each be awarded the Bronze Star for their efforts. If they managed to snag an ampule—broken or intact— they also have the attention of Deep Void.

ALTERNATIVE USES

This mine can be used outside of the Frontier War campaign. With a few minor adjustments to location descriptions, it can be adapted to a number of other scenarios on other worlds.

ARCTURIAN WINTER: Weyland-Yutani has quietly established deep iron mines on Arcturus' northern hemisphere—which is currently in a several years long winter. It's an illegal strip-mining operation, of course—one that both the UA and Arcturians themselves are unaware of. It remains to be seen what kind of ecological impact the mines will have on the planet, and there just may be an ancient Engineer hangar full of Juggernauts located there. See page 143 for more on Arcturus.

WHAT WAS LEFT BEHIND: On some other world, a similar mine has been abandoned for several years. When a corporate evaluation team goes back in to assess the possibility of reopening the facility, they report some kind of creature—and then fail to respond to communications. Has some local underground predator like the Harvesters (page 318 of the core rulebook) infested the mines during the hiatus? Can the Marines clear the bugs out?

MISSION 7:

OPERATION OCTOPUS GARDEN

DEEP VOID SAFEHOUSE AND BIOWEAPON RESEARCH FACILITY, DARWIN ISLAND, PANDORA

Thanks to the PCs, General Vaughn's treason has been exposed. In response, the General has gone into hiding. The PCs must invade Deep Void's safehouse, wipe out the Xenomorph scourge and bring Vaughn to justice. But the story of the Border Bombers isn't quite finished, and the Children of the Two Divines have one last card to play.

GEAR UP

The PCs have access to UDEP Ponchos, Rebreathers, M11 Platypus Fins, ASSO-400 Harpoon Grappling Guns (page 120 of the core rulebook), a folding winch and polymer rope, and their standard gear for this mission.

As quartermaster, MU/TH/UR 9000 (i.e. you) should let the PCs take other equipment they think they may need on this one—as long as they can carry it. They also get whatever vehicular method of insertion they request.

WHAT'S THE SITUATION, MU/TH/UR?

As the *Tamb'Itam* decelerates from FTL, the PCs are thawed and called to duty once more. Feel free to modify this text to fit the particulars of your campaign's results. Their CO begins right away:

"Thanks to you, the Secretary of Defense is alive and well. The intel you've gathered during this war has exposed the Deep Void organization within our ranks. Several high-ranking officers are under arrest and pending court martial. You personally have cut out the cancer within the USCMC. The Secretary has authorized me to give you all field promotions effective immediately [all PCs advance one rank].

Congratulations. But we do have one small problem marines—the big fish have slipped the net. General Vaughn and her Deep Void yes-men have gone rogue—they must be brought to justice. I know the General treated the Gunfighters with open arms after Fort Nebraska, but make no mistake—Vaughn is a traitor to the United Americas.

MU/TH/UR's deep analysis of the data obtained during Operation Go Fish has pinpointed a Deep Void facility on that hothouse shitstorm planet called Pandora. Sound familiar? Darwin Island is about 120 klicks from of Adaiga Island and Anesidora Colony. We were right in her goddamn backyard.

System sensor net showed the Blackguard's Tungu Allang transport and Vaughn's Black Bart ship entered the Pandora system about a week ago. As of this morning, dropships have been making repeated cargo runs from the island to the Allang in orbit. She's down there, Marines, I can feel it.

The Tamb'Itam is carrying a company of Marines. It will engage the Tungu Allang and make a frontal assault on the island. I need an infiltration team to slip past their defenses, secure all Project Life Force, Berserker Program, and Deep Void data for evidence. Take Vaughn and any other high ranking Deep Void leaders alive—we've got to know how deep their bullshit goes and they've got to face trial. So get them, get the data, and get out so we can nuke the damn site from orbit.

Here's what satellite recon has put together for us (show the PCs the map of the island). MU/TH/UR has examined several options for getting in, and I've boiled it down to three. Your asses are on the line, so I'll leave the final decision to you. Good luck, Marines."

AREN'T YOU DEAD?

By the time Operation Octopus Garden occurs, the fate of several key NPCs may have already been decided. Either both the androids Mishka and Maitland are alive and free, one is alive and the other dead, or both are dead. One or the other or even both may be captured and in Vaughn's custody.

Similar variables apply to Dr. Babak, Dr. Ahluwalia, Mr. Ganon, and the Black Guard's Captain Karambit or Sargeants Seax and Lance.

If these characters survived your campaign, it can offer players a sense of closure to face them one final time in the campaign finale. Provisions have been made throughout the text to include them, but the mission is designed to work with or without them.

The presence of Mishka and Maitland will be felt even if they have been deactivated, as the Firstborn carry on their legacy (see the event That Which Survives).

WHAT THE HELL IS REALLY GOING ON?

Just what you think. Darwin Island is Deep Void's home for Project Life Force. It's here that they developed the Biodrone. It's here they cultivated the healthiest of Xenomorph hives. It's here that General Vaughn had all of Life Force's specialists and assets consolidated so that she could clean house in one fell swoop. Now, she has come home to pack her stuff, kill anyone she considers a liability, and bug out.

Currently, the Blackguard are executing all Project Life Force scientists. With the Corps gunning for her, Vaughn will use every dirty trick she can think of—sacrificing her forces, releasing her Xenomorphs to roam the grounds, activating Berserkers, infecting an exec with a Goreburster—anything to stall the PCs until she can get her artifacts loaded and ship out before the *Tamb'Itam* nukes the site from orbit.

But Vaughn isn't the only one who's been busy. With the Blackguard preoccupied, six Firstborn Children of the Two Divines have quietly infiltrated the island. There are three couples—each a man and a woman who have cut and dyed their hair to match that of their spiritual leaders—Grandmother Mishka and Grandfather Maitland. If either or both of the androids are alive and free, they are here with these Firstborn. If either or both of the androids have been captured by Vaughn, the Firstborn are here to rescue them.

Finally, even if both androids are dead, the Firstborn are here to carry out their leaders' mission—get Deep Void's Engineer musical compositions and artifacts, use them to complete the starmap the androids started, forge a path into the unknown depths of deep space and create a new world of their own.

WHERE THE ENEMIES ARE

Vaughn has set her Xenos loose to cause problems for any would-be invaders—and they have inadvertently slaughtered most of her Blackguard.

- **A Xenomorph Scout searches for dozens of Ovomorphs spread across the island in the event Scouting Party.**
- **A total of five Xenomorph Soldiers are left on the island—two guard the Xenomorph Hive and three are in stasis—one at the Rig Mag Rail Station, and two more in the Hangar Grotto.**
- **Two Goreburster are in the colonial rig—one in the Showers and the other in the Experimental Lab.**
- **A monstrous Praetorian stalks the island with murderous intent in the event Royal Blood.**
- **Thirteen Blackguard Commandos are spread across the island—one in each of the six bunkers, one patrolling the beach in an XT-37 Stinger, two hiding in the commons, one in the Suites. Two in the Morgue, and Major Kiliij in the Tactical Center, but they need not all be adversaries.**
- **One Berserker is stationed at a Beachhead Bunker of your choice.**
- **General Vaughn is mobile in the event Dead or Alive.**
- **Essentially noncombatants, there are thirty Deep Void Technicians breaking the facility down—16 dismantling displays in Artifact Hall, two at the Ground Station, four on monitor duty in the Tactical Center, two loading Vaughn's ship in the Hangar Grotto, four flying AS-19D Bearcat Strikeships in patrols around the island, and two more maintaining the M201 Mobile Rocket System on the Western Slopes.**
- **Six Firstborn Children of the Two Divines have infiltrated the island in the event That Which Survives.**
- **Finally, there are many Hungry Tendrils in the Shallows just offshore.**

METAPUZZLE PIECES

In order to reach this mission, all six epiphanies must have already occurred (see the Metapuzzle on page 193). There is still a final epiphany to learn here, however. The Children of the Two Divines were controlled by Mishka, not Jannes. Mishka and Maitland found a partial starmap in the Engineer's musical notes. They intended to steal Vaughn's black goo and Engineer musical compositions, complete the starmap, set off into deep space, and create a new world. If one or both of the androids still function, they will do just that. If both of them have been deactivated, their followers—the Firstborn—will follow through with their plans instead.

ENTERING ORBIT

Once they enter orbit, the USS *Tamb'Itam* is assaulted by the Blackguard's Bougainville-Class Attack Transport—the USS *Tunku Allang*. Just as the PCs prepare to deploy, two Blackguard frigates—the Adowa and Vidar—enter orbit. As they outflank the *Tamb'Itam*, the *Tunku Allang* drops back—drawing the PCs' ship in range of the island's rail gun defenses. The *Tamb'Itam* has a fight ahead of her.

This initial combat can be described to the PCs or be played out as per the starship combat rules in the core rulebook. The *Tamb'Itam* must maneuver to a position where she can launch the PCs and pull out of orbit before she is destroyed by surface railgun fire. Once the PCs launch, the fate of the *Tamb'Itam*' is left for you to decide (see the Death of the *Tamb'Itam* event).

INSERTION

The PCs are welcome to utilize any insertion method they've employed in past missions. There are other ways the PCs can elect to get to Darwin Island—each with its own risks.

- **DROPSHIP DEPLOYMENT:** Due to the island's air defenses, MU/TH/ER says a dropship insertion has only a 37% probability of success. If the PCs try for it, their dropship gets hit hard and crashes in the shallows just offshore on a sandbar of Hungry Tendrils (see The Beach on page 336). The dropship is wrecked, and each PC suffers two points of damage, mitigated by **MOBILITY** rolls as for falling damage. The PCs will then have to storm the beach against heavy fire from the beachhead bunker guns—not to mention Berserkers. The dropship's weapon systems are still online, however, and it can deploy its upper missile racks to combat any bunkers and berserkers.
- **DEEPSEA DEPLOYMENT:** The PCs can launch from the *Tamb'Itam* in a Service Skiff instead. While the craft will be extremely vulnerable as it descends through the atmosphere, upon reaching the ocean's surface it can be used as a submarine. The Skiff can take the PCs past Darwin Island's shoreline detection grid, but they will have to leave her anchored in a shallow trench about a kilometer out. They'll have to use rebreather masks (Air Supply 2) and platypus fins to make it the rest of the way.
- **DEAD DROP DEPLOYMENT:** The PCs may want to chance using the individual DDR-E3 Dead Drop Re-Entry Insertion Vehicles from Operation Quiet Catch. Reacquaint yourself with the DDR-E3 and its deployment procedure on page 100—then see Quiet Catch's Insertion heading on page 266 for how to play it out. Any marine whose pod is hit by railgun fire, however, will land offshore and need to swim to land (see The Ocean, Shallows, and Beach on the next page). The thermals here will catch the other parafoils and force them down on the Caldera or in the Hot Springs Lagoon—Dealers Choice.

DARWIN ISLAND

Less than a kilometer wide, Darwin Island is actually an atoll formed by a mostly submerged volcanic caldera. As such, it is all beachfront and volcanic rock with scraggly undergrowth and a smattering of tropical trees. A small waterway passes through the Killbox Canal to Hot Springs Lagoon at its center. The Darwin Facility is a colonial rig that is suspended within the caldera itself, just over the lagoon—in theory allowing the bioweapons developed in the base to stay relatively divorced from the environment. That's the theory, at least.

The seaward approach to the island is not a simple one, as dangers both natural and technological work to keep Darwin isolated.

THE OCEAN: The ocean currents are strong on Pandora and can force the PCs past Darwin Island into deeper waters. Each PC needs to make a **STAMINA** roll to get back on course. Failure means **STRESS LEVEL** +1. One attempt can be made each Turn.

Should the PCs choose to approach via the sea, they may encounter a "D" model Bearcat VTOL Strikeship patrolling the island. The Deep Void Technician pilot heads directly towards the PCs' location. She will stop to check the waters for infiltrators, inadvertently providing the PCs with a possible cover for entry to the Darwin facility.

THE SHALLOWS: The submerged sandbars just offshore are infested with Hungry Tendrils (below). At low tide they curl up and bury themselves in the sand. At high tide they attach to anything that moves in the water.

THE BEACH: As indicated on the map, there are Beachhead Bunkers spread out across the shoreline. The stretches of beach between bunkers are either mined with Armat M111 Anti-Vehicle Mines or patrolled by a Blackguard XT-37 Stringer Fast Attack Vehicle (Dealer's Choice).

An **OBSERVATION** roll is required to notice a buried M111 Mine, even when actively looking. If a PC enters the mine's proximity (**ENGAGED** range), it will detonate (Blast Power 12). Each PC must make it past one mine to leave the minefield.

If the PCs encounter the XT-37 Stinger vehicle, it breaks through the tree line and onto the beach, headed in the direction of one of the bunkers. If the PCs do nothing, it will slow—then its Blackguard Commando driver will turn her around and take another look at the beach.

HUNGRY TENDRIL

SPEED: 1

HEALTH: 1

SKILLS: Mobility 1

ARMOR RATING: 1

ATTACK: Step too close to a Hungry Tendril and it makes a grapple attack with six Base Dice. The attack does no damage but grabs the victim if it hits. The victim must make an opposed CLOSE COMBAT roll vs. the Tendril's six Dice to break free. Victims will be snagged and dragged underwater to drown (page 111 of the core rulebook).

THE RIG

The colonial rig that is the Darwin Facility is a standard W-Y modular construction processing facility used on various worlds—typically as a farm, factory, or for general administrative functions and housing. On Darwin Island, the facility is being used specifically to experiment on and store Xenomorph XX121 and other biological weapons.

The rig is a roughly 80-meter cube suspended over the lagoon in the center of the caldera. Made of fiber enhanced hybrid materials, the rig sways enough to survive gale force winds. Three pylon struts anchored into the Caldera walls keep the rig suspended over the Hot Springs Lagoon. The undercarriages of the west and east facing struts are equipped with a mag rail system, providing transport between various caverns and the rig itself.

The top platform of the rig—designated Surface Level 00—is flush with the edge of the caldera rim, while the bottom of the rig is a good eighteen meters above the lagoon. Its interior is broken down into six sublevels of varying heights with machinery and thick acid resistant armor between them.

Normally, the rig accommodates 300–500 personnel. Much of the rig has been abandoned already, but members of General Vaughn's cleaning crew are packing artifacts, deleting computer files, and slaughtering scientists to clean up any loose ends. At this point, there are only about 50 people left alive on the island.

ISLAND LOCATIONS

BEACHHEAD BUNKERS AND BERSERKER CAGES: There are six bunkers spread out around the island, each defending a particular beachhead. Each reinforced bunker has Armor Rating 6 and holds a Blackguard Commando armed with a Smartgun. An MX11A1 Hovertread vehicle is kept in a small ditch bay by each bunker, allowing the guard to retreat if necessary.

One of the bunkers (Dealer's Choice) can activate a subterranean cage hangar that will rise from the ground. Inside is a single Berserker unit. A second command activates the Berserker. See The Beach on page 326 for other potential obstacles here.

HOT SPRINGS LAGOON: The water here is vibrant blue and a steamy 43 degrees Celsius, heated by the magma chamber below. At its center is the deepest point—about ten meters. The dismembered remains of 13 Blackguard Commandos float in the water. The twisted metal scrap of an ejection pod is wrecked on the rocks of the lagoon shore. If the PCs look up at the rig, they can see the empty Queen's Chamber cavity where the pod used to be attached.

Something big, dark, and serpentine lies beneath the water here—a majestic head crest jutting out of the water like some sadistic shark fin. It's a dead Xenomorph Queen. A deactivated Berserker unit kneels waist-deep in the water, leaning against her spiky corpse. The Berserker's canopy has been ripped open and its dead pilot is missing half his face. If a PC wants to remove the body, they can take control of the damaged exosuit, but with the expected consequences (page 168).

CALDERA: The Caldera is made of coarse lava rock that will cut and scrape anyone who falls on it. Its inner walls are a sheer 100 meters high with the colonial rig sitting within it and the lagoon resting at its bottom. Set back from the edge, several UA 571-C Sentry Guns (page 125 of the core rulebook) are spread out evenly across the rim of the caldera—spaced so that any two have an overlapping field of fire for any given position. The guns activate if anyone without a Deep Void transponder signal reaches the rim. If the PCs hug the caldera wall and avoid the rim top, the guns can't reach them.

GROUND STATION: Two Deep Void Technicians man this Ground Station Bunker. A cable car here will take the PCs up to the rig's Cable Car Platform on Sublevel 03. The car is currently locked down and will require a **COMTECH** roll to activate. An XT-37 Stinger Fast Attack Vehicle is also parked here.

BLACKGUARD COMMANDOS

These Blackguard commandos are having second thoughts. As AW Soldiers, they have been unswervingly loyal to Vaughn. She stood up for their rights and gave them the respect that the rest of the Corps hadn't. Now, though, they are beginning to see that Vaughn has betrayed the flag and the country they have pledged their lives to. They also aren't too happy about being used as hosts for alien parasites. Each Blackguard Commando is named after a melee weapon such as Tekko, Katar, or Emeici. For more on AW Soldiers, see page 164.

STRENGTH 6, AGILITY 3, WITS 3, EMPATHY 2

HEALTH: 6

SKILLS: Close Combat 4, Ranged Combat 5, Mobility 3

TALENT: Overkill

GEAR: Black M3 Armor with Deep Void IFF Transponder, Dog Tag ID Keys, M41AE2 Pulse Rifle, two combat knives, six grenades.

A NOTE FROM MU/TH/UR: If they survived the operations they were involved in, Captain Gabriel A.W. Karambit, Sergeant Armitage A.W. Seax, and Sergeant Jeremy A.W. Lance can lead any Blackguard group encountered in Operation Octopus Garden.

The PCs have a good chance of turning each Blackguard Commando they meet over to their side if they stop to reason with them. If the PCs convince any group leader to stand down, their squad will fall in line as well. If this happens, the PCs may soon have their own AWS platoon to command for the mission's duration. ■

RIG LEVEL 00

ROOFTOP HANGAR DECK: There is a hydraulic pad here to lift a VTOL craft from the garage below. There are currently two Blackguard Cheyennes on standby here—a UD-4C Gunship and a UD-4L Dropship. Their pilots are MIA. Four Deep Void Technician piloted Blackguard AS-19 D Bearcat VTOL Strikeships come and go from this platform, patrolling the shoreline of the island and ferrying Blackguard squad commanders to and from the bunkers.

COLONIAL RIG PYLONS AND RAILGUN EMPLACEMENTS: These three support struts keep the rig from falling into the atoll's Hot Spring Lagoon. The island's mag rail travels along the underside of the east and west pylons. Anchored to each strut on the caldera is a BD-33 Celestial Artillery Railgun. Purchased by Deep Void on the black market, these automated rail cannons will constantly fire at the *Tamb'Itam* as long as it remains in orbit.

A well-placed breaching charge (**HEAVY MACHINERY** roll to find the right spot) will severely damage one of these guns, weakening the rig support strut nearest it. See the event No Tip for what happens next.

CENTRAL CARGO LIFT AND LADDERS: This large 6x12-meter cargo lift runs up a shaft in the center of the rig, along with three ladder tubes.

RIG SUBLEVEL 01

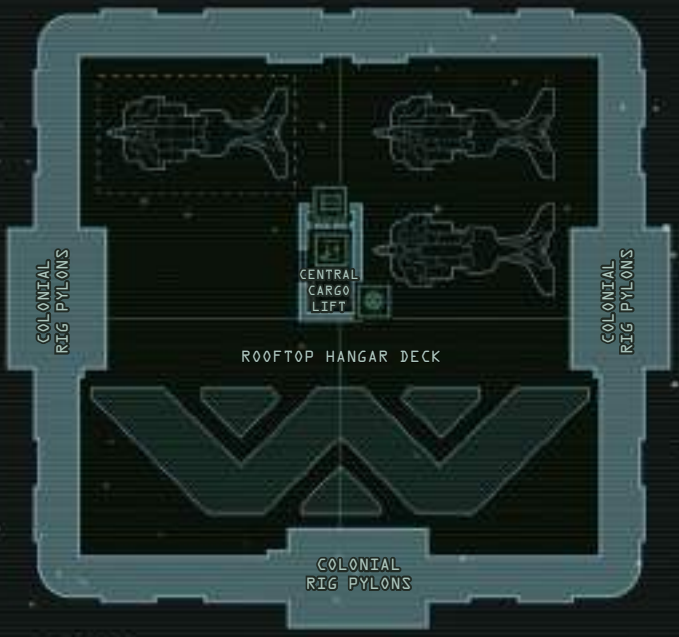
Mostly devoid of life thanks to the evacuation, Sublevel 01 functions as a barracks and quarters for the Blackguard Commandos and the Deep Void Technicians. The vaulted ceilings on most of this sublevel are ten meters high.

SUBHANGAR: The UD-4L Cheyenne Dropship here has the equivalent of a dead battery. A **HEAVY MACHINERY** roll and one Turn hooked up to the hangar's charging station will get the dropship in the air. The equipment and tools in this subhangar add a +3 modifier to any vehicle related **HEAVY MACHINERY** rolls. One door here leads to the Commons and another to the Rig Mag Rail Station.

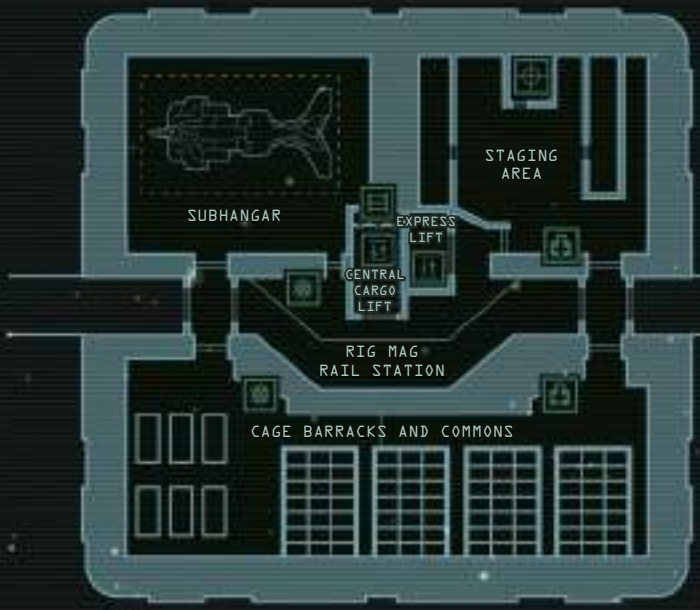
RIG MAG RAIL STATION: A derailed mag rail train lays on its side, driven up on the platform and against the door. It's flipped flatbed car has scattered a dozen prone stasis tubes across the track and platform. Eleven are empty, their transparent shields clawed and smashed from the inside out. There are signs of a firefight, but no blood. Hibernating within the one intact fluid-filled container is a **PASSIVE** Xenomorph Soldier. The overhead mag rails lead to the Eastern and Western Lava Tubes. Two walkways cross under the mag rail to connect the north and south sides of the sublevel.

DARWIN ISLAND

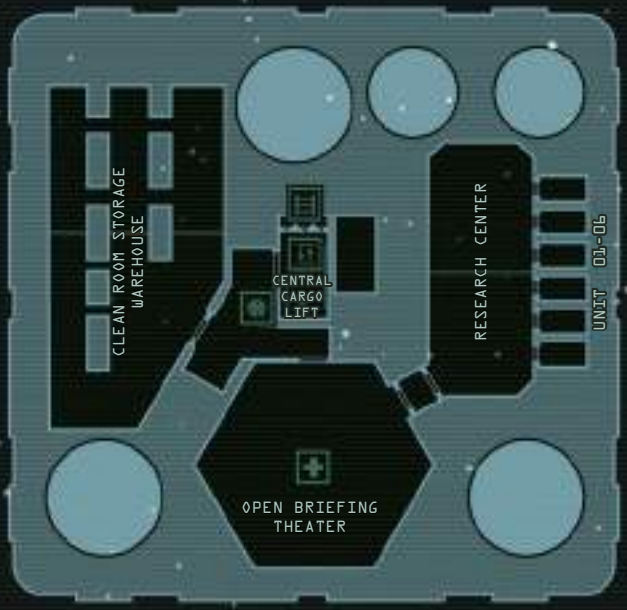
COLONIAL RIG



LEVEL 00



SUB-LEVEL 01

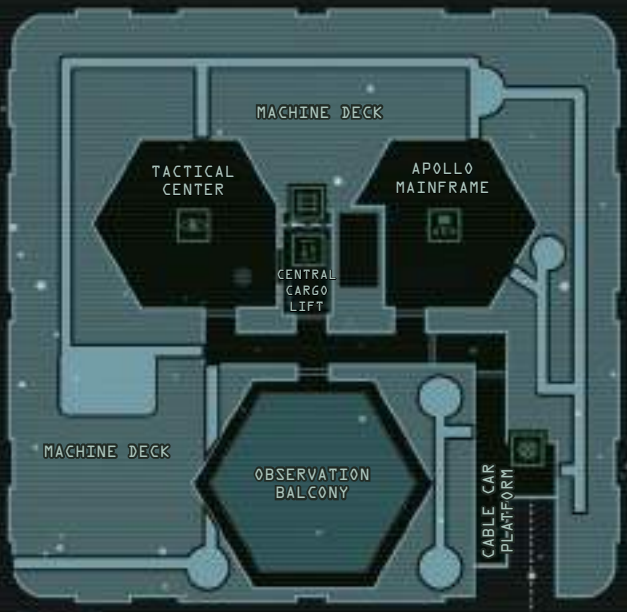


SUB-LEVEL 04

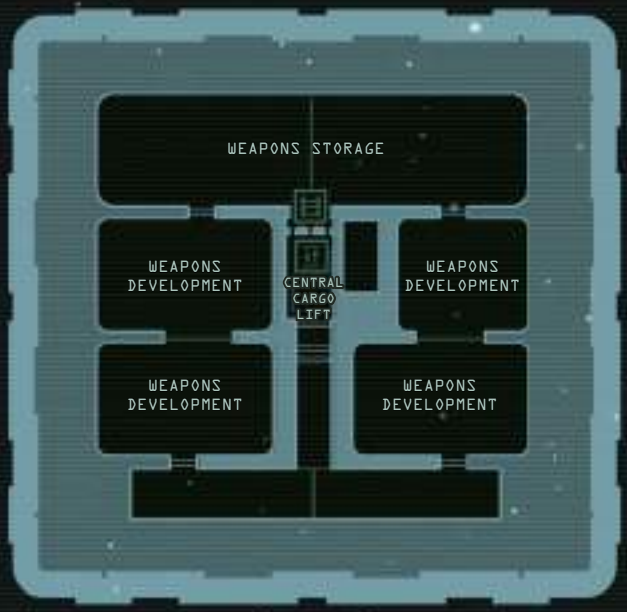
INTERCOM
MEDKIT
LIFT
LADDER ACCESS
ARMORY
OBSERVATION
MAINFRAME
MEDLAB
ZONE BORDER

10X10 METERS

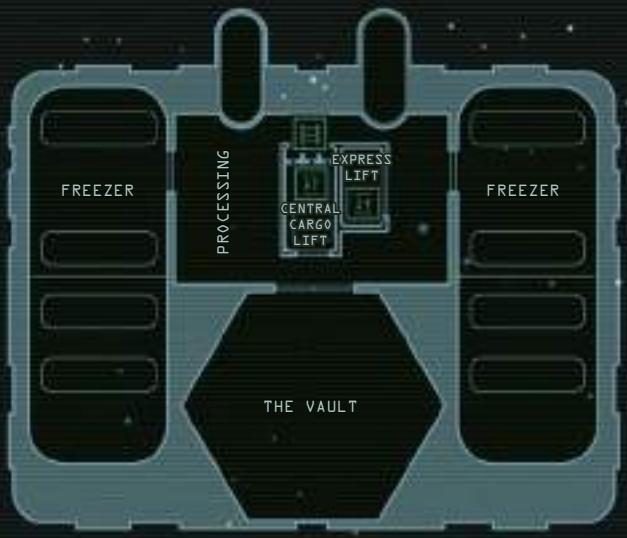
SUB-LEVEL 02



SUB-LEVEL 03



SUB-LEVEL 05



SUB-LEVEL 06

PLAYER MAP

CAGE BARRACKS AND COMMONS: The entry here from the Subhangar is barricaded from the inside. If the PCs manage to get in (requires a **HEAVY MACHINERY** roll), these sections are littered with over three dozen exploded bodies, victims of a loose Xenomorph Goreburster (page 177) Pink slime trails curl across the floors, under the tables in the commons, and over the bars of the cage barracks.

The Goreburster is now hiding in the Showers. Two **PASSIVE** Blackguard Commandos are hiding in the cage barracks, terrified of the creature. If the PCs do not attack them, the commandos will ask for help in hunting down the creature and answer any questions the PCs have.

STAGING AREA, QUARTERMASTER, AND UNISEX COMMUNAL SHOWERS: The PCs can find any reasonable clothing, personal gear, and Deep Void IFF Transponders in the Quartermasters. A weapons locker in the staging area holds a dozen M41 Pulse Rifles and ammo.

The many rows of communal showers are all running. The room is steamed and there is an inch of water on the floors—diluted blood has backed up the drains. A **PASSIVE** Goreburster is curled up in the drainage pipe here and will strike like a cobra.

RIG SUBLEVEL 02

The vaulted ceilings on this opulent level are some ten meters high. External floor to ceiling transparent walls wrap around the entire sublevel here They are polarized and composed of starship-grade viewport materials.

EXECUTIVE SUITES AND OFFICES: There are four luxurious 600 square meter suites of personal rooms here. Each suite's interiors contain a foyer, personal office, bath, sleeping quarters for up to three, and a wraparound lounge with a bar, library, and viewscreen. Due to the evacuation, no doors here are locked.

- **COMMAND SUITE:** A personal suite that Vaughn only shares when the facility has high ranking visitors, these quarters look barely touched—like a clean hotel room that is awaiting new guests. Vaughn's room has a bug-out duffle bag resting on her perfectly-made bed. Inside the duffle bag is a steatite ampule, scores of magnetic tapes full of Engineer musical compositions, civilian clothing, and several vials of biochemicals (see Vaughn's bio on page 200). If you choose, the ampule may be intact and carrying Agent A0-3959X.91 – 15. If the PCs leave the room and re-enter it, the bag will be gone.
- **WEYLAND-YUTANI SUITE:** Mr. Ganon, Ms. DeRosa, and Ms. Eckford shared this suite. Eckford's room is emptied and cleared out following her death in *Destroyer of Worlds*. The other two rooms look to be half-packed. $20,000 in W-Y dollars and a VP-70 pistol are hidden in Ganon's pillow.
- **HYPERDYNE SUITES:** As the PCs enter this suite, they will smell smoke. Lyndon is in the suite's lounge burning all his discs and papers in a small trash bin. If the PCs enter the other rooms here, they will find two dead Hyperdyne execs, both shot in the head by Lyndon.

  Lyndon will immediately surrender to the PCs, and attempt to make a deal, offering to testify against Deep Void to save his own hide. If the PCs ask, he says Vaughn took the Eastern Lava Tube to the Hangar Grotto to prep her ship, but she said she's coming back. He doesn't know it, but Vaughn had him infected with a Xenomorph Goreburster that will pop whenever you're ready.
- **GEHOLGOD SUITE:** This group of ransacked rooms housed the top specialists involved in the project—most of which are dead. Vaughn ordered one of her men to search the rooms for any secrets the scientists might have hidden from her. The Blackguard Commando stuck with the job has found a case of glass vials containing a dozen doses of Rhodes Vaccine (page 204).

  Dr. Babak had his quarters and a small medical office here. They are now wrecked, but his personal Pauling MedPod (page 136 of the core rulebook) still works.

RECEPTION HALL: There is a lot of activity here as sixteen techs and their overseer(s) pack up billions of dollars worth of artifacts. This hall is full of large crates that have been vacuum wrapped and sealed. Six Deep Void Technicians here are using P-5000 Power Loaders to bring the crates to the Central Lift. The center of the hall is dominated by an awesome sight—four more Deep Void Technicians are dismantling Deep Void's reconstruction of an Engineer's Orrery platform (page 289 of the core rulebook).

Still exposed in the hall are several Engineer stone tablets and biosuits, delicately being removed by six more Deep Void Technicians under the watchful eyes of W-Y appraiser Ms. DeRosa and xenoarcheologist Dr. Ahluwalia from Operation Arcturian Apocalypse.

If Ahluwalia did not survive her mission with the PCs, it will just be DeRosa. Ahluwalia will recognize the PCs and act friendly. DeRosa will not, opting to draw her ES4 Pistol and use the closest person as a shield (Ahluwalia if applicable). At gunpoint, she'll order her shield to pick up her nearby briefcase and pass it to her. DeRosa will attempt to make her way to the Central Lift and then the roof, to rendezvous with a dropship.

SPENCER LYNDON

HYPERDYNE CORPORATE EXEC

A bloated, mousy little man, Lyndon is also a coward. He will offer to immediately go colony's evidence against Vaughn and Deep Void—all to protect himself and Hyperdyne's involvement in the Berserker program, of course. The General already suspected Lyndon would betray her, however—and had the exec infected with a Goreburster (page 177).

STRENGTH 2, AGILITY 3, WITS 5, EMPATHY 4

HEALTH: 2

SKILLS: Observation 3, Command 3, Manipulation 6

TALENTS: Cunning, Personal Safety

GEAR: ES-4 Pistol, wrist worn Deep Void IFF Transponder, X-Stims, briefcase with $20,000,000 cash.

PETRA DEROSA

WEYLAND-YUTANI ARTIFACT APPRAISER

Ms. DeRosa was brought into Deep Void for her knowledge of antiques. Fifteen years ago, several artifacts from the Arcturian Conflicts surfaced on the black market. A young appraiser then, Ms. DeRosa identified fourteen forgeries and three authentic pieces that were misidentified as fakes. She has inventoried and reviewed every one of Vaughn's Engineer artifacts—and she's planning on getting off Pandora with a few of the more valuable ones herself.

STRENGTH 2, AGILITY 3, WITS 5, EMPATHY 2

HEALTH: 2

SKILLS: Observation 4, Command 2, Manipulation 4

TALENT: Personal Safety

GEAR: ES4 Pistol, wrist worn Deep Void IFF Transponder, Engineer jade crystal artifact (appraised at $50,000,000) in her briefcase.

DEEP VOID TECHNICIANS

These cross-trained technicians are rank and file noncombatants—most of them believe that this project is USCMC run and that the PCs are mercenaries or traitors, but they aren't willing to risk their lives to stop them.

STRENGTH 3, AGILITY 3, WITS 3, EMPATHY 2

HEALTH: 3

SKILLS: Heavy Machinery 3, Piloting 2, Ranged Combat 2, Comtech 3

TALENT: Spaceship Mechanic

GEAR: Cutting torch, tool kits, wrist-worn Deep Void IFF Transponder, Dog Tag ID Keys, pack of Koorlanders.

RIG SUBLEVEL 03

MACHINE DECK (BIODRONE NEST): This entire level is automated life support, reactor batteries, and ammo storage. The rig draws power from the Power Shunt in the subterranean magma pocket that collects power and stores it here. It is a maze of crawlways, repair ports, and service ducts that have been turned into a hidden Biodrone nest, guarded by two now dead Biodrones. There are six cocooned Blackguard Commandos here, half alive and slowly turning into Ovomorphs.

TACTICAL CENTER: General Vaughn and her on-site Blackguard commander, Major Kiliij can control the entire Blackguard from this command post. Four Deep Void Technicians are running this room under the direct command of Major Kiliij.

APOLLO MAINFRAME: This computer governing system is already wiped clean when the PCs arrive. All it does is write "HELLO" over and over again on all screens.

CABLE CAR PLATFORM: A cable car runs from here to the Ground Station, allowing officers to reach their ground transport quickly.

BLACKGUARD MAJOR ARNOLD A.W. KILIIJ

Kiliij is torn—he is a well-disciplined soldier who follows the orders of his superiors, but he recognizes that Vaughn has betrayed the principles the USCMC stands for—as well as used his AW brothers and sisters as cannon-fodder. He is a patriot who will offer a truce with the PCs and help them grab Vaughn. He wants nothing in exchange, he will testify in court as to his own involvement. Kiliij loves the corps. Period.

STRENGTH 6, AGILITY 4, WITS 3, EMPATHY 2

HEALTH: 6

SKILLS: Close Combat 4, Ranged Combat 5, Command 3

TALENT: Pull Rank

GEAR: Armat M41AE2 Heavy Pulse Rifle, Black M3 Armor with Deep Void IFF Transponder, Dog Tag ID Keys.

RIG SUBLEVEL 04

OPEN BRIEFING THEATER: Six Pauling MedPods run down the center of this hexagonal chamber, flanked on each side by medical monitoring stations. The MedPods here are programmed to administer antidotes to 26 Draconis, surgically remove Chestbursters, and inject 26 Draconis into anyone infected with Neomorphic Motes (each action takes one Turn and requires a **MEDICAL AID** roll for the MedPod (page 136 of the core rulebook).

There are 13 dead scientists piled in the center of this room, all gunned down by Vaughn's Blackguard. Dropship fuel has been dumped all over the bodies.

If Dr. Babak survived Operation Quiet Catch, he is one of the scientists here—shot twice but not dead. Babak is broken but can be revived if he receives **MEDICAL AID** (page 98 of the core rulebook). Betrayed by Vaughn, he will help the PCs if they promise to get him out alive. He's got Project Life Force data files on him.

OBSERVATION BALCONY: This upper audience level is part of the Open Surgical Theater but only accessible through Sublevel 03. It is protected from the surgical theater below by acid proof glass and equipped with a wide array of monitoring equipment. High ranking Deep Void members can observe medical experiments from here.

RESEARCH CENTER: This hall has six isolation units with transparent doors. There are rows and rows of glass vials along the wall containing exo-biological toxins, pathogens, and vaccines. A greatest hits list includes 26 Draconis, Rhodes Vaccine (page 204), Neomorphic Motes (page 294 of the core rulebook), Goreburster slime (page 177), Arcturian Kleharge (page 172), and even the New Earth Plague (page 172). It would behoove the PCs to tread lightly in this lab—a firefight or protracted melee could lead to an accidental toxin or pathogen spill.

- **UNIT 01:** A strangely calm scrawny kid with dozens of needle marks up his arms huddles here in his underwear. His chart says his name is Private Gilmore and he was assigned to Fort Nebraska. More importantly, it suggests he's immune to the accelerant. If so, he could be the key to a cure. Life Force scientists infected Gilmore with everything and anything, from XTB to *P. praepotens* to 26 Draconis. He has survived it all—but he has been permanently chemically lobotomized in the process. Gilmore doesn't know anything or anyone anymore, all he knows is people call him Gil.
- **UNITS 02–04** are empty.
- **UNIT 05** holds a curious anomaly—a plump Xenomorph Goreburster. The cell is covered in pink slime that oozes out of the creature. It will quietly watch the PCs from behind the glass, gorging on the exploded remains of the corpse in its cell. When the PCs are occupied with something else, the Goreburster will begin screeching and hurling itself against the glass (+1 **STRESS LEVEL**). At a dramatically appropriate time, it will batter the door until it buckles enough for it to spill out and slither away as fast as possible. The Goreburster will then follow the PCs wherever they go, attacking when their guard is down.
- **UNIT 06** is warped, forced open from the inside. A residue of pink dried powder leads from the cell to the door the PCs came through, but dissipates halfway across the room. This cell used to contain the Gorebuster that is terrorizing Sublevel 02.

CLEAN ROOM STORAGE WAREHOUSE: This icy room is full of a hundred hanging body bags filled with bloody corpses—all victims of xenobiological pathogens stored for study. Any surgical tool or anesthetic the PCs might want can be found here.

Two **PASSIVE** Blackguard Commandos are here, fiddling with a stubborn pre-ignition line on an incinerator unit that won't start. Vaughn ordered them to execute the scientists in the Surgical Theater, then incinerate them and the entire Experimental Lab. Utterly loyal, they will attempt to complete their orders even if confronted by the PCs.

RIG SUBLEVEL 05

WEAPONS STORAGE AND DEVELOPMENT: This level has double reinforced steel walls made of the same acid resistant materials used to store toxic waste—not that it matters, someone left the airlock to the Central Lift here open. The interior of this steamy sublevel is a sculpted, living, alien hive. While there are many more in here, the PCs will encounter no more than two Xenomorph Soldiers—but they don't need to know that. The Xenos are **PASSIVE** and spread thinly throughout the hive.

RIG SUBLEVEL 06

THE FREEZERS: When the doors are opened, the PCs will encounter an abandoned power loader standing with its back to the entrance of each freezer. These rooms are filled with rows of glowing stasis tubes. Twenty are filled with Ovomorphs.

EXPRESS LIFT: This express elevator runs direct from Sublevel 01 to Sublevel 06, bypassing all levels in between.

PROCESSING: A massive robotic arm runs on a ceiling track throughout the hall here. Called "the collector," this arm retrieves ovomorphs from the Queen's Chamber and either stores them in the Freezers or sends them up the Express Lift to the Rig Mag Rail Station. Now the arm moves about the corridors as if confused, looking for something to pick up and take somewhere.

THE VAULT: If the PCs try to enter this room, they are in for a surprise—it's not here. The Queen's chamber was once here, a detachable pod that could be ejected to the surface. The first PC through the door will be hit with a gust of hot wind. They must make a **MOBILITY** roll or fall one zone down to splash into the Hot Spring Lagoon below. The base damage is 3, mitigated by **MOBILITY**.

The chamber itself can be seen below, smashed open on the rocks of the lagoon shore. A large, dark armored body lies underwater near it (see the Hot Springs Lagoon for details).

CALDERA

THE KILL BOX CANAL: There are four visible UA 571-C Sentry Guns set up on the rocky deep canal entry into the Hot Springs Lagoon. They will open fire on anyone not wearing a Deep Void IFF Transponder. The waterway here runs 20 meters deep, sloping up to ten meters in the lagoon itself.

If the PCs decide to swim through the canal, each PC must make a **MOBILITY** roll. Success allows them to swim through undetected. If any PC fails, an alarm sounds (+1 **STRESS LEVEL**) and the guns go live. The Sentry Guns can traverse far enough to fire into the water, but with a –3 modifier.

EASTERN LAVA TUBE: This eastbound mag rail tunnel slopes downward to a mostly submerged chamber under the Hot Spring Lagoon.

POWER SHUNT: The rig gets its geothermal power from a power shunt here that's driven deep into a magma pocket below the island. Three well-placed Armat Type 4 Breaching Charges or a successful **HEAVY MACHINERY** roll and a Turn of work can cause a pressure build up in the magma pocket. See the Volcano! event for what comes next.

WESTERN LAVA TUBE: This mag rail tunnel slopes down, stopping at the Depository before continuing up to the Hangar Grotto.

CALDERA MAG RAIL STATION: On the deck of this station, there's a large crate with six power vices in it—these can be locked on an egg for relative safe transport (1 in 6 chance of failure). Mag rail power is dead. The bodies of three scientists lie here, riddled with bullet holes. Each wears a Deep Void IFF Transponder on their wrist.

HANGAR GROTTO: From the air, this hangar's sunroof egress is completely obscured by vines and undergrowth. Anyone crossing over the western Slopes here can make a successful **OBSERVATION** roll to notice what looks to be a vegetarian-choked sinkhole, some 10 meter deep.

Anyone falling or climbing down it will find themselves on top of Vaughn's ship, the Mantis-class *Black Bart*. The hangar is just large enough for the *Black Bart* and service/refueling equipment. Any vehicle related **HEAVY MACHINERY** rolls made here gain a +2 bonus from this service equipment.

There are two dozen clamped Ovomorphs in stasis tubes inside the *Black Bart's* cargo hold—and there are two **PASSIVE** adult Biodrone Xenomorphs in glowing blue stasis tubes standing on the loading dock by her rear hatch. Two Deep Void Technicians use Power Loaders to load several sealed crates of Engineer and Arcturian objects from the Artifact Hall into the ship.

DEPOSITORY: This former magma pocket is vast—at least the size of a stadium and about 60 meters from floor to ceiling. Sterile floodlights bathe the chamber, illuminating a sea of ovomorphs.

A lattice of catwalks is suspended over the ovoid shapes, bisecting the brood. Small streams of sand descend from the fracture-ridden lava rock ceiling.

THE WESTERN SLOPES: This side of the volcano slopes down towards the beach—covered in dense scrubs and undergrowth. An M201 Multiple Launch Rocket System vehicle is set up here with a 360 degree view of the horizon.

Two Deep Void Technicians are focused on loading the massive rocket launchers. They are **PASSIVE** and will not see the PCs approaching. Also on the Western Slopes is the "sinkhole" entrance to General Vaughn's Hangar Grotto.

A NOTE FROM MU/TH/UR: If he survived Operation: Blaze of Glory, Weyland-Yutani Insurance agent Mr. Ganon is in the Hangar Grotto, overseeing the loading of Vaughn's ship. Ganon will recognize the PCs and surrender immediately, telling them whatever they want to know. If Ganon did not survive or would otherwise not be here, disregard this note. ■

EVENTS

Here are some events that you can spring on the players. The events don't all need to occur, and they don't need to occur in the order listed. Instead, see the events as an arsenal of drama for you to use as you see fit.

THAT WHICH SURVIVES (MANDATORY): This overarching event runs in the background throughout the operation. When the PCs are on the beach or at the lagoon, they may discover a deflated and hastily buried pontoon raft on the shore. Outside and inside the facility, the PCs will sometimes catch a glimpse of two hooded and cloaked figures carrying 3WEF90 Assault Rifles—always just too far away or too quick to be caught. Sometimes it seems they disappear from one direction and somehow appear somewhere completely different in the same encounter (+1 **STRESS LEVEL**). At one point, a PC can get a glimpse of these strangers under their hoods—they appear to be Maitland and Mishka (see Aren't You Dead?).

They are actually the Firstborn Children of the Two Divines, here to gather data and/or rescue their android masters. There are a total of six of them. They can be found stealing data disks from the Tactical Center or Suites and Executive Offices, gathering xenobiological samples from the Experimental Lab, stealing Engineer artifacts from the Artifact Hall or even praying before a looming Xenomorph (bad idea). If the real Maitland or Mishka are prisoners of Vaughn, they are looking to free them.

The Firstborn will ultimately attempt to make their escape via the *Black Bart* in the Hangar Grotto. If questioned, they will explain who they are and why they are here—the Engineers' musical notes aren't just songs, and they aren't just genetic code markers—the notes are also spatial coordinates. See What the Hell is Really Going On? and Aren't You Dead? for more info.

THE FIRSTBORN CHILDREN

These elite Children are so obsessed with the teachings of the androids Mishka and Maitland that they dress and cut their hair like them. These children go by bizarre church-given names like Mouse, Tyke, Toro and Elvis. The Children do not see the PCs as enemies, and will help them if doing so will benefit their cause.

STRENGTH 4, AGILITY 3, WITS 2, EMPATHY 5

HEALTH: 4

SKILLS: Close Combat 4, Mobility 2, Ranged Combat 3, Manipulation 3

TALENT: Nerves of Steel

GEAR: Black Market F903WE Assault Rifle, six doses of X-Stims, a razor blade hidden in each shoe, Armat 4 Breaching Charge strapped to their chest.

HOW'S THE WEATHER? Darwin Island is subject to extreme tropical storms, and one is on its way as the PCs make their move. The storm hits whenever you want it to, of course. The outdoor effects will give a –2 modifier to all **OBSERVATION** and **MOBILITY** rolls. Ten-meter waves will crash into the island, flooding the Beachhead Bunkers and Ground Station, as well as the Eastern Lava Tube and Power Shunt—knocking the power out while emergency low level generators kick in.

A dropship not properly lashed to the Rooftop Hangar will tip and slide off, crashing into the Hot Spring Lagoon below. Attempting to fly in the storm requires **PILOTING** rolls each Round to avoid a crash. The Blackguard will have their hands full locking things down, so the PCs will have a good chance of infiltrating the facility with little resistance.

SCOUTING PARTY: A lone **PASSIVE** Scout Xenomorph perches in a tree or on a rock face, trying to catch the scent of the Depository, seeking out eggs in order to ensure the survival of its species. If it sees the PCs, it will try to pluck them from above and kill them in the trees.

NO TIP: Whether through the frigates in orbit raining death on Darwin Island or a little explosive sabotage of the Railgun Emplacements, one of the rig's struts has been severely damaged. The facility begins to list drastically, giving a –2 modifier to all **MOBILITY** rolls. The PCs need to get out before another strut snaps from the strain and the entire rig tumbles into the Hot Spring Lagoon. When the time is dramatically appropriate, the rig will fall, collapsing in on itself as it does.

ROYAL BLOOD: This event starts anywhere on the island except within the facility. If the PCs are on the beach or in the lagoon branches snap at the treeline. If the PCs are in the lava tubes or on the caldera's rim, dust and small rocks crumble from the rock face. Something big is coming. Project Life Force didn't realize that they had a Xenomorph Praetorian (core rulebook page 312) growing in their hive. The Praetorian is searching the island for its missing Queen—and god help anyone who gets in its way. If the PCs elude the beast, it will continue to hunt them throughout the mission, even breaking into the rig to follow them.

FRIENDLY FIRE: When the PCs are at their worst, the cavalry arrives! The enemy position that's been giving them shit is vaporized. EVAC Fighters whoosh by overhead, taking out Blackguard weapons emplacements. Three of the *Tamb'Itam's* dropships have punched through the defensive perimeter, unloading two dozen Marines. While their forces keep the Blackguard busy, the PCs can focus on finding Vaughn.

DEATH OF THE TAMB'ITAM: Although she managed to destroy the Vidar and Adowa, Darwin Island's railguns have done their job on her—the *Tamb'Itam* is burning in the atmosphere—and its on a collision course with the colonial rig! The PCs need to vacate the rig and find shelter. The massive frigate will barely miss passing over the rig, crashing through the installation before plowing through part of a caldera wall, and driving itself into the seabed next to the island. This mass destruction can lead to the event Volcano!

VOLCANO! This event can be triggered by the Death of the *Tamb'Itam* (above), sabotaging the Power Shunt beneath the lagoon, or any other number of things. Something has caused the volcano beneath the island to begin to erupt. As pressure builds beneath it, tremors will shake the island. The Hot Springs Lagoon will flash boil, creating a massive cloud of scalding steam as the Eastern Lava Tube and Power Shunt will fill with magma.

From there the actual eruption could be relatively mild, with an initial blast that damages the rig followed by the caldera slowly filling up with lava. If the eruption is severe, it could cause a pyroclastic blast of fast moving gas and volcanic matter that will turn everyone on Darwin to ash before creating a tsunami that will wipe out the coastal communities of Anesidora Colony. Dealer's Choice, depending on how bad your day was.

DEAD OR ALIVE: The PCs have finally caught up with Vaughn! By the time they find her, the General has her bug out bag—a duffle filled with civilian clothing, an intact steatite ampule, and Engineer musical compositions recorded on magnetic tapes. If Vaughn had previously captured Maitland or Mishka, she has their head(s) in her duffle as well—and you better believe those talking heads will be trying to convince the PCs to help them.

Vaughn has already inoculated herself with Rhodes Vaccine, so Xenomorphs will not attack her (page 204). If she is near any stasis tubes holding Xenomorphs, she will not hesitate to awaken them. Vaughn carries a VP-70 pistol and wears a bandoleer outfitted with six glass vials—one each of 26 Draconis, Rhodes Vaccine, Neomorphic Motes (page 204 of the core rulebook), Goreburster slime (page 177), Arcturian Kleharge (page 172), and Sweet Dreams (page 203).

She will threaten to drop one if the PCs don't let her leave. Vaughn just wants to go with her wares, she has no quarrel with the PCs. She plans to reinvent herself and become an independent bioweapons contractor. If the PCs tell Command they killed her and were unable to secure her body, they get to look like heroes and she gets to walk away. If not, she is going to start smashing vials of death.

If forced to take action, Vaughn will toss a vial of Sweet Dreams at the PCs. As it shatters, she will tell them it's Neomorphic Motes. Any PCs in the same zone without a Compression Suit must make an immediate **STAMINA** roll (no action). Those who fail will experience a shared hallucination of birthing a Neomorphic Bloodburster (page 294 of the core rulebook) for D6 Rounds. Play out each PC's gruesome hallucinogenic death while Vaughn tries to slip away.

If Vaughn needs a little extra muscle, feel free to pull two of the Blackguard Commandos from the beachhead Bunkers and have them protect her. Vaughn's ultimate goal is to make it to the *Black Bart* at the Hangar Grotto. When she gets there, two of the Firstborn Children from the event That Which Survives will be waiting to take her duffle bag and ship.

FINALE

As things become tense, alarms start to blare on the island. Any enemy forces the PCs are fighting will withdraw and scramble for whatever remaining dropships are on the island. An open channel on the PCs' comms will squawk to life with frantic chatter from the *Tamb'Itam* and/or the rig's Tactical Center—the Border Bombers have entered the system (+1 **STRESS LEVEL** for all PCs).

The Bombers' EMP knocks out any ships still in orbit—they do not fire it in the atmosphere. Instead, they enter the upper atmosphere of Pandora and wait. This time, the Bombers are here to observe before they destroy.

If the PCs can look outside, they see an ominous shadow in the clouds or even—weather permitting—a form suddenly eclipsing the sun as the ship moves into position high above the island (Dealer's Choice). A low and steady thrumming vibrates through the air.

If the PCs manage to destroy the island by initiating the Volcano! event or by any other means, the Border Bombers will be satisfied and leave. Any ships knocked out in orbit by their EMP will survive. If it looks like the PCs will not be able or willing to blow up the place, you can either play out the event Death of the *Tamb'Itam* to destroy the island or let the Bombers drop their payload of black goo—which will destroy all organic life across the entire planet.

Either way, the Bombers will not pursue any escape ships this time. It is possible that Vaughn and/or the Children will escape in the *Black Bart*. If so, the PCs should be given a chance to shoot the *Black Bart* down either via dropship, vehicle, or heavy weapon.

AFTERMATH

After Operation Octopus Garden, General Vaughn's misappropriation of military funds for an unsanctioned bioweapon development is made public. The bioweapons are described as, "pathogens derived from the New Earth Plague." The existence of Xenomorph XX121 and the Engineers is kept secret from the public. In light of General Vaughn and other high ranking officers' abuse of power, the Secretary of Defense's plan to restructure the militaries of the UA member states under a single banner is approved. The USCMC is expected to become the UACMC by 2187.

Any mention of Deep Void is also suppressed—as knowledge of a decades old secret organization within the military might cause some concern amongst colonists and politicians alike. With the dismantling of Project Life Force and the Darkstar Program, the Border Bombers go quiet—for now.

Weyland-Yutani CEO Michael Bishop releases a statement condemning his company's complacency in developing any xenobiological weapons. Hyperdyne Corporation lawyer's up, eventually working out a plea bargain and developing Berserkers exclusively for the Colonial Marine Corps.

An investigation by the Colonial Marshal Bureau determines that the Geholgod Institute and its scientists were unaware of General Vaughn's motives. Aside from Dr. Nl Babak—who was acting on his own—each specialist was only given one piece of the Engineer puzzle to handle. Most of them never had the big picture. Only Drs. Chawlka and Liu pieced it together—and they attempted to flee and warn the Institute.

A former UPP politician (perhaps Mal Weber from Operation Dreamcatcher) steps forward and presents evidence of the Union's own biological weapons programs. The UA and UPP sign a cease-fire agreement, banning the development of and use of all bioweapons. Diplomats and politicians scramble to hammer out an armistice.

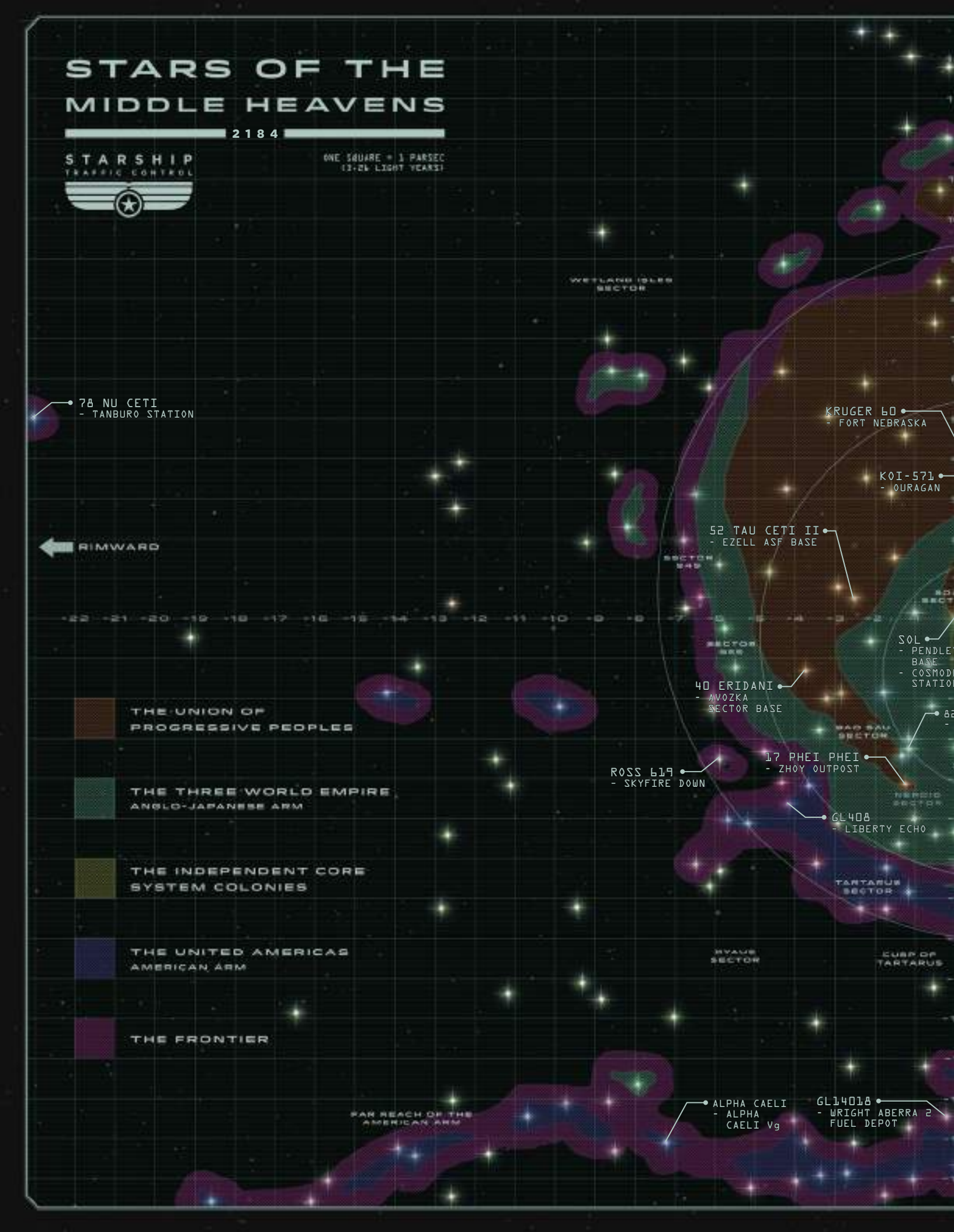
As the Frontier War comes to a close, a new conflict spins out of its remains. Colonies abused and abandoned during the Frontier War have begun building their own militias and small fleets. Farmers have turned into raiders, stealing freighters full of food and other supplies from the shipping lanes to survive. These Colony Wars threaten to destabilize the Frontier once again.

The Children of the Two Divines have all but disappeared—either they have gone off into deep space or into hiding. The one question no one has asked is what happened to the *Tunku Allang*?

For over 24 hours, dropships ferried artifacts and ovomorphs from Darwin Island to the Blackguard attack transport. The *Tunku Allang* was last seen withdrawing from battle while its sister ships hammered the *Tamb'Itam* in orbit over Pandora—but its final fate is unknown.

"You're going out there to destroy them, right? Not to study, not to bring back, but to wipe them out."
"That's the plan. You have my word on it."

—ELLEN RIPLEY AND CARTER J BURKE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ONE SQUARE = 1 PARSEC
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KOI-571
- OURAGAN
52 TAU CETI II
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SECTOR 249
SECTOR 566
SOL
- PENDLE BASE
- COSMOD STATIO
40 ERIDANI
- AVOZKA SECTOR BASE
BAO BAU SECTOR
17 PHEI PHEI
- ZHOY OUTPOST
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NEREID SECTOR
GL408
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TARTARUS SECTOR
THE UNION OF PROGRESSIVE PEOPLES
THE THREE WORLD EMPIRE
ANGLO-JAPANESE ARM
THE INDEPENDENT CORE SYSTEM COLONIES
THE UNITED AMERICAS
AMERICAN ARM
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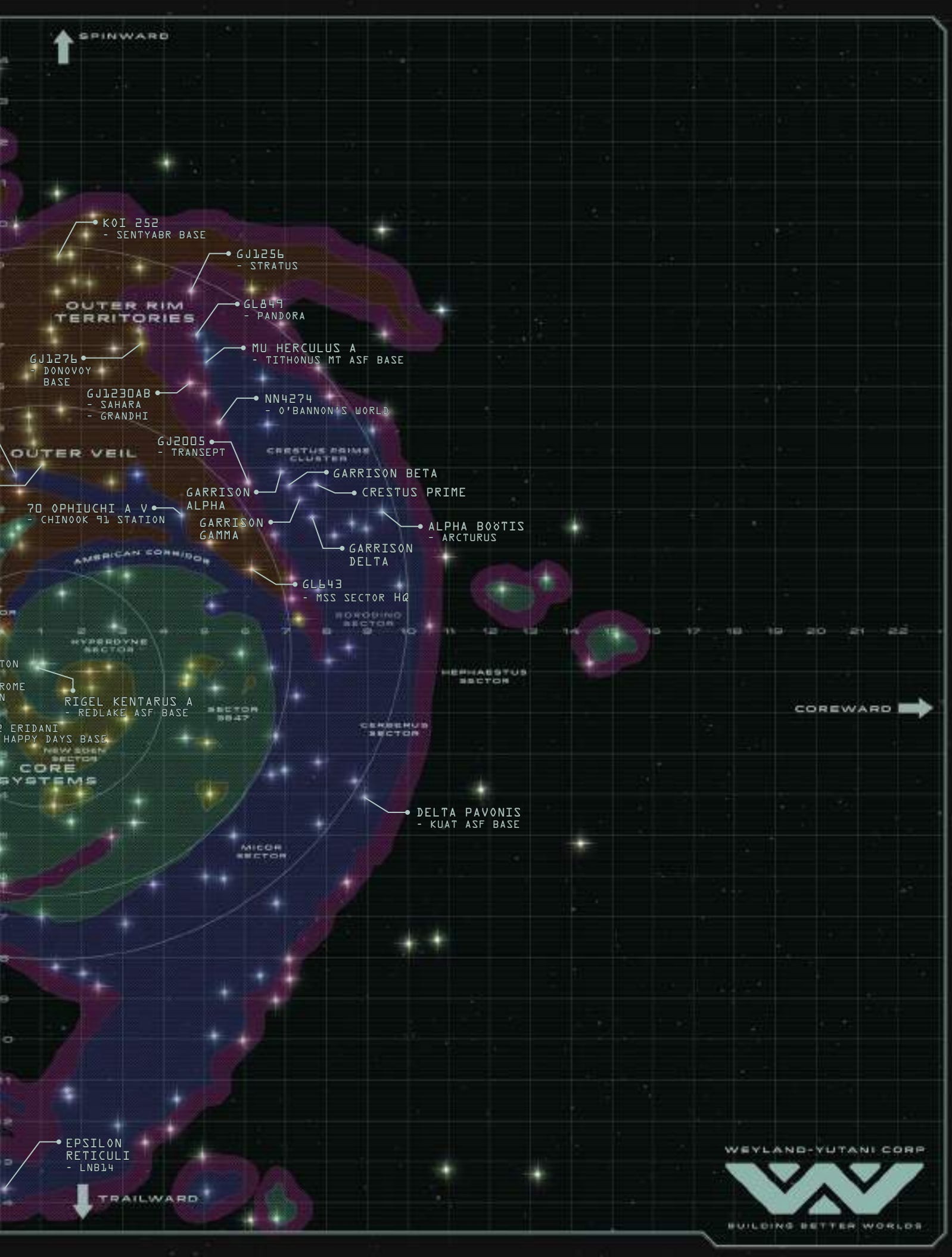
SPINWARD
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GJ1256
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GJ1276
- DONOVOY BASE
GJ1230AB
- SAHARA
- GRANDHI
NN4274
- O'BANNON'S WORLD
OUTER VEIL
GJ2005
- TRANSEPT
CRESTUS PRIME CLUSTER
GARRISON BETA
CRESTUS PRIME
GARRISON ALPHA
70 OPHIUCHI A V
- CHINOOK 91 STATION
GARRISON GAMMA
ALPHA BOÖTIS
- ARCTURUS
GARRISON DELTA
AMERICAN CORRIDOR
GL643
- MSS SECTOR HQ
BORODINO SECTOR
HYPERDYNE SECTOR
HERMAEOSTUS SECTOR
COREWARD
RIGEL KENTARUS A
- REDLAKE ASF BASE
SECTOR 3847
CERBERUS SECTOR
HAPPY DAYS BASE
NEW EDEN SECTOR
CORE SYSTEMS
DELTA PAVONIS
- KUAT ASF BASE
MICOR SECTOR
EPSILON RETICULI
- LNB14
TRAILWARD
WEYLAND-YUTANI CORP
BUILDING BETTER WORLDS

Armor piercing rounds sizzle through raw flesh as plasma beams sear swollen retinas. Acrid smoke chokes down your throat before you realize what's burning is you. Chemical attacks melt your armor, simmer your eyeballs, and fuse your helmet to your skull, while bioweapons turn your insides out and pulp you into a quivering mound of black jelly.

Welcome to war on the razor edge of space, marine—where nukes are yesterday's news, pulse rounds are cheap and a human life is only worth its weight in stock options. It's a living hell—but none of that's as bad as the flashes of gnashing metal teeth that terrorize you every time you try to close your eyes—like some monster just split your head open and crawled inside your dreams.

Sometimes you've gotta wonder what the hell it's all for.

But no one pays you to ask why, only to follow orders. You're just a grunt—no offense. So lock and load your pulse rifle, Marine—you've got a job to do. Protect and serve the citizens of the Outer Rim colonies—no matter what the cost.

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